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Gertrude Gardner
from her Sunday
School Teacher.

May 3rd 1863





Kansas Story.—Frontispiece.



"It's no use; I'm finished."

p 1-6

KATE MORGAN

AND

HER SOLDIERS.



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NOTE.

THE following story appeared originally in one of our leading religious periodicals, the author reserving the copyright. It excited very general interest, and urgent requests for its publication in book form were received from many quarters.

In reply to an inquiry as to the character of the narrative, the author says, it "is *mainly* only too true."



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LIFE IN KANSAS.

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LIFE IN KANSAS.

CHAPTER I.

LEAVING NEW ENGLAND.

LIZZIE MERWIN shut the "keeping room" door with great care, one night, almost four years ago, and as she did so, she put her finger to her lips in token of silence. Her brother, Sydney Merwin, and her cousin, Katie Morgan, had come with her out of the "keeping room," and at the instant Lizzie gave this invitation to silence, one of Sydney's feet had reached the first step of the staircase.

Katie Morgan laid a finger on his arm. Sydney turned around, and looking at his sister Lizzie, asked, "What is the matter?"

"Please take off your boots, Sydney, before you go up stairs. I am sure father is

sick to-night, I never saw him look so before," answered Lizzie.

Sydney looked doubtful. Katie came to Lizzie's defense by saying, "Something is the matter with uncle John, Sydney."

Sydney sat down upon the stair, and drew off his heavy boots with a great sigh. Lizzie caught them before Sydney threw them down, but he disappointed her efforts at silence by opening the door that she had shut with so much care.

Mr. Merwin looked up. "I thought you had gone to bed," he said.

"Shall I go for the doctor?" asked Sydney.

"For the doctor, my boy? Who wants the doctor?"

"Lizzie said she knew you were sick, and I thought I would ask before I went to bed."

"Where is Lizzie?"

"Here, sir," and Sydney stepped aside that his father might see his sister.

Mrs. Merwin had been sitting beside a little round stand that had been in the family since the great-grandmother was a little girl, whose brown grave-stone the children had that very day been trying to take the moss

from, that they might read the epitaph on it.

On the little round stand lay the week's stockings, of all sizes, from Mr. Merwin's down to those worn by two tiny feet that had never walked. Baby was asleep in the cradle, and this was Mrs. Merwin's time to mend the stockings. She must have laid down the very one that she was mending when the children said "good-night," for her hands were folded quite still when Sydney opened the door.

She spoke very softly to her husband. She said, "It is all decided now, and the children may as well know of it."

"Come in, all of you," said Mr. Merwin.

"Just wait till I get my boots on," whispered Sydney. "I shall have to go for the doctor now, I know," and he sat down on the step again and drew on the boots, Katie and Lizzie waiting for him.

There was a mystery in Sycamore Cottage that July night, almost four years ago, and the three children were awed by it, and they went back into the "keeping room" in a hushed kind of way that all children

have, either in the presence of sorrow or mystery.

Mr. Merwin held out his hand to his eldest child, Sydney, and drew him to his side. Lizzie and Katie stood near the round stand, and waited in silence.

At last Mr. Merwin found voice to speak. "Children," he said, "in three weeks from to-day we shall be ready to leave this place."

"Leave Sycamore Cottage!" exclaimed Sydney and Lizzie. "What for? There isn't a place half so nice in Greendale; not another one that I would like to live in at all."

"But we are not going to live in Greendale, and you will not have to choose your house."

Speechless with astonishment the children did not know what to say. Life beyond Greendale was all one great dark cloud, and they could not see into it.

At last Katie Morgan spoke: "Are we all going to die, Uncle John?" she asked, in the most serious manner.

This question aroused Sydney. "Shall I go for the doctor now?" he asked. "It will be too late if I wait any longer; the doctor

wont go out after nine o'clock. I heard 'his man' say so yesterday."

"The doctor and 'his man' may stay at home to-night," said Mr. Merwin. "I am not sick, Sydney, I am only troubled."

"Do you owe anybody, father? If you do, there is my savings bank, up stairs; it has ever so many pieces in it; you may have them all, and then may be we can live here ever so much longer."

"Sycamore Cottage is sold, Sydney. I am to get the money for it to-morrow, and in three weeks we shall be on our way to Kansas."

"Kansas! What is that? Where is it?" asked Lizzie; "I never heard of it."

"It is a country far away, across ever so many States, and Indians live there," said Sydney. "I know them, the Pottowatomies, Pawnees, Delawares, Iowas, Otoes, and the Sacs and Foxes. I learned about them last week, but I never thought I should see them."

"I don't want to go; it's a horrid country; do let us stay in Greendale; there isn't anything Indian here except that big

mound, where they say Indians are buried, and the tomahawk that the man has who lives over Fir Hill; *don't* let us go, father," and Lizzie Merwin took up her father's hand, in a very pleading manner.

"Uncle John, please tell me what you are going for," said Katie Morgan.

"I am going, Katie, because I think it right to go; because I can do more good in Kansas than I can here."

"Uncle John, are you going to be a missionary to those Indians?—I forget what Sydney called them."

"You can't, father; you can't talk Indian one bit!" exclaimed Lizzie. "And if they were telling me they would kill me and eat me up afterwards, I shouldn't know what they meant," and Lizzie's eyes showed all the horror her words suggested.

Mr. Merwin quieted all the fear of Indians, and told the children the story of the country to which they were soon to go. "We shall have to build our house," he said, "for there are no houses to buy or rent in that part of Kansas, and so, you know, we can build it to suit ourselves."

"Out of logs?" suggested Sydney.

"Out of logs, my boy, until we can get a better house built."

And the little circle stayed and talked a long, long time, and built the house of logs in imagination, very strong, and high, and large, and all at once it fell, like that which the foolish man built on the sand, because it had no foundation.

Katie took out the key stone by the question, "What are we going to do until we get the house built, Uncle? Shall we live in the woods? Bugs and things will bite the baby, and it rains out in Kansas sometimes, doesn't it?"

Sydney looked at his boots, and said, "What if a snake *should* bite the baby in the woods, are there any doctors in Kansas?"

"The doctor is going with us," replied Mr. Merwin, "and we are to live in a large camp-wagon until we can cut down the trees and make our house, if we cannot find any other place to stay in."

Lizzie looked very doubtful. "Shall *you* like it, mother? Can you bake or get breakfast in a wagon?"

"O, we can make fires in the woods, and burn up a prairie to make tea by, so that we shall have plenty of light to go to bed with. I shall like Kansas, I think, father," said Sydney, "and if Frank Lines is going too, that will be so much better. I hope I shall see just one live Indian before they all go away from Kansas, that is, if he doesn't ask for my scalp."

"I wish you wouldn't talk any more about the Indians," said Katie.

"I wont," replied Sydney.

"Go to bed now, my children, and don't think any more about it until to-morrow morning," said Mrs. Merwin, and the three little ones said the second "good night," and Lizzie once more closed the "keeping-room" door.

It was very late when Mrs. Merwin rolled away the last pair of stockings, and there came up a great sigh as she put back the little round stand to its place in the corner, where it had been at home since the day before her marriage, the very place her mother's hands had assigned it when she came to arrange Sycamore Cottage for the fair

young bride, who now cautiously approached the cradle at a small stir that caught her attention.

Up the stairs Sydney lay awake until he thought the summer and the winter stars had all got mixed up together; the stars that came up so late he had never before seen in a July night.

Lizzie and her cousin Katie were talking still, when Mrs. Merwin went up to see that all was safe for the night, talking in childish wonder about the mighty Kansas that lay beyond so many rivers in the great land of the West.



CHAPTER II.

PREPARING TO GO.

“ISN'T it queer, Lizzie, to think of the last morning we shall wake up and find ourselves in this little bed?” asked Katie, as the “getting-up” bell rang, and she opened her hazel eyes to the light.

“I don't know,” sleepily answered Lizzie, and she went back to the dream her cousin aroused her from.

Katie lay quite still, thinking, thinking, with a grave, old way, that was quite beyond her years, until Sydney knocked on the wall. “Are you going to sleep all day?” he called.

Katie gave the answering knock on the wall, and leaning over Lizzie, gave her a good-morning kiss. “Wake up, Cousin Lizzie, we've ever so much to do to get ready to go to Kansas.”

“I was dreaming about it,” said Lizzie.

"Mother had just got tea ready, and the great red sun was going down behind the trees, when a bear, or a wolf, or something—it was so quick I couldn't tell what it was—came running out of the woods and snatched all the supper off the table, and was gone before father could load his gun."

"I don't believe we shall have any bears or tables either in Kansas," said Katie; "so I don't believe your dream will come true; but do you know that breakfast is ready? There goes the bell!"

"Three weeks, mother! What time in the summer will it be when we go?" asked Lizzie at breakfast, fully awake at last.

"The first day of August, and you and Katie may as well bring your books home from school to-night, for I shall want the help of all the little hands in my camp, to be ready in time."

"Mother talks like a soldier already," admiringly said Sydney; "I think she will get on in Kansas, or anywhere, for that," lingeringly said the boy, and he looked at her with praise in his eyes, as true as that which greeted her years ago, when she came, a

sunny-haired young bride, to make life sweet in Sycamore cottage.

Sycamore Cottage was a lovely home. It had soft curves of wood and stone, and the very outside wore an expression of the charm within. It was in the midst of a grove of sycamores and grand old oaks, that wear all winter their rustling leaves, changed to the dark red hue, that the autumnal equinoctial has no power to turn or sweep from their true allegiance. But it was summer now, and dark red had given place to the brilliant, shining green, and all along the ground lay sycamore balls, beaten from the trees by high winds.

It was in the afternoon of the same day, that Lizzie and Katie were hastening home from school, each heavily laden with a satchel of books on one arm, and the other filled with articles that satchels could not hold, when, just as they entered the enclosure, they met a strange gentleman coming down the walk from the house. Great drops began to fall through the trees at the moment he met the children, and he turned and walked back with them, carrying both their heavy satchels.

"Do you like to leave this pretty place?" he asked.

"No, indeed we do not," answered Katie; "and for my part I wish Kansas might be left to the Great West and the Indians. Have you ever been in Kansas, Sir?"

"Yes, my dear," answered the stranger, "and we only want a few good men, like your father there, with their families, to make it a delightful place."

"Is it you who have been coaxing my father to go?" asked Lizzie.

"Not coaxing, only telling him how much good he may do by going, and you, too, little girl."

Now they were out of the sheltering trees, and the rain fell fast, so that the three ran a race for the verandah, where they met Mr. Merwin. The gentleman was Mr. Graves, who stayed at Sycamore Cottage that night, and told the children marvellous stories about the country beyond the Mississippi and the Missouri, until Kansas grew in their imagination into enchanted land, and Lizzie went to sleep imagining herself resting under a bouquet of prairie flowers larger than her grandmother's bed-quilt, ornamented with the "rising sun."

CHAPTER III.

STILL PREPARING TO GO.

LIZZIE MERWIN sat on the floor of the garret in Sycamore Cottage. Strewn around her were the "playthings" of all her little lifetime. The oval window at either end of the garret was swung open, to let in the July airs that were stirring outside. Lizzie looked up from the last new doll, whose waxen face she had just hidden from view under a fold of cotton, not to be looked at again until she unpacked it in far-away Kansas. She gazed at the scene in childish dismay, and exclaimed, "Oh dear, dear! We *never* shall get ready. Look, Katie Morgan, at all these things!"

For two or three minutes Lizzie and Katie surveyed the garret in silence. There hung "Robin Hood," the sled, just softly touched with summer airs—the sled that had sped

Kansas Story.



"O dear, dear! We *never* shall get ready. Look, Katie Morgau,
at all these things."

p. 22.



with arrowy-swiftness down one-half of the snow-clad hills of Greendale.

"I wonder if we shall have any hills in Kansas. Poor old sled! It is *too* bad to leave it behind," said Katie, and she took up the rope in her hands, and stroked lovingly the coarse, hempen fibres.

"But we cannot carry it. I heard father tell Sydney so yesterday, when he was packing his tool-chest. There is no room for it."

Katie did not answer, but she wiped away one tear, at the last wish for "Robin Hood," and walked to the swing hanging from the rafters, far up to the angle of the roof. "I suppose we shan't have any garret in a log-house," she said; "but you know there are plenty of trees out there. Come, please, Lizzie, and hold the ladder for me. I am going to carry this dear old rope with me, if I have to wear it for a necklace."

"What a queer cousin you are," exclaimed Lizzie; "but I will help you in just one minute, as soon as I smooth down 'Queen Elizabeth's ruffles, so that they will fit into this box," and giving the last fold to her doll's attire, she declared the queen ready

for the journey, and herself prepared to assist Katie.

Resting the top of the step-ladder against a high-up beam, Lizzie held it fast there, whilst Katie went up to unloose the rope. A moment later, and it lay on the floor. Never again would the strong strands do duty in that garret. Katie came down the ladder and laid the rope in order very carefully, and then she lifted it in her arms.

"What are you going to do with it?" asked Lizzie, as she saw Katie drawing near the stairs.

"Don't ask me, Lizzie," said Katie, looking back, and thump! thump! on the stairs went the rope, for it was more than Katie could carry, and she was forced to drop it.

Lizzie was too busy afterwards to ask Katie what became of it, but I happen to know that she dragged it all the way to her room, where, coil by coil, she laid it into her own trunk, that was standing ready to be packed. Then she very cautiously covered it over by articles of clothing, that no one might see it, and when it was concealed, she said to herself with a deal of contentment,

"There! I shall have *so much* of home with me, whatever comes."

Katie went back to the garret, and with Lizzie worked steadily and well until the sun went down, and it began to be dark up among the rafters.

"This is Friday," said Lizzie, as the last ray of sunshine fell from the western window; "we have only to-morrow, because we can't pack on Sunday, you know. We will come up ever so early to-morrow morning, so that we can finish in time to bid good-bye to all the girls," and with these words the garret door closed behind the two children, and the echoes went to sleep among the rafters.

All the next morning the little ones in Sycamore Cottage were as busy as beavers, and when the dinner-bell rang for the last time, the vast garret was empty of all its treasures. The house that John Morgan built, before he went to sea, was given, with many a long-drawn breath of feeling by Sydney, to his best friend, with a private agreement that if he came back to Greendale, it should be returned to him. And so he turned the tiny lock of the tiny door, and delivered

the key thereof to his friend, and walked down from the door to the gate, whistling with all his might, lest those unmanly tears should come out and tell what a baby he was, to cry for a toy, a toy his cousin built, who went to sea and never came back again, because he found his grave down amid the tangled weeds of the Pacific ocean. At the gate of his best friend's house lay the sled that had come down from the garret. Sydney found a group of boys surrounding his property.

"Holloa, Sydney Merwin, have you gone crazy, too, to have your sled out in July? I heard my father say your father was crazy, going away off to some good-for-nothing place, where nobody lives, and nobody don't want to, I guess."

"See here, Jim; it would be a little better for you to say nothing against my father, for his money bought that sled, and I was going to carry it to your house to give it to you. Will you carry it home, and slide down Burnt Hill, next winter, on it?"

"Xactly! I guess so! You *don't* mean to say you give this to me, out and out, do you?"

“Of course I do, and here’s a good-bye to you, Jim. I sha’n’t see you again. Don’t forget the Sabbath-school. Good-bye, boys,” and Sydney Merwin left the group standing there in amazement. “Jim” was the worst boy in Greendale. He would steal “the paint off the church-yard fence,” the boys used to say, “if it was painted,” and only the last winter, he actually had stolen Sydney’s sled, the “Robin Hood,” and sold it to a boy in the next village, where, by chance, Mr. Merwin found it, and bought it back, saying nothing of the matter for the sake of Jim’s mother, who was a good woman. Judge, now, of Jim’s surprise at this gift of the same sled that he had stolen and sold! He picked it up and trudged away with it down the hill, muttering to himself, “It does beat all I ever saw. I guess it’s me that’s crazy, after all. I know just how ‘Robin Hood’ feels. I’ve lifted it afore now, and I know how’t feels to steal, too. I guess I will go to the Sabbath-school agin. I’ve never dared to, since I stole this ere sled.”

CHAPTER IV.

SETTING OUT.

LIZZIE and Katie went from one end of Greendale to the other, up and down the long street in the village, that same Saturday afternoon. They bade good-bye to little friends, to the poor, the old, and the hurt, from Aunt Kelly, one of the "Church's Poor," as they were called, down to the Irish woman, whose name was Kelley, who had lost one eye in a quarrel, and who, never in all her life had heard so many kind words as Lizzie and Katie had spoken to her, as she said, "out of the warmest of places in their hearts; and a'most warmed up her own."

Now, she stood at her hovel-door, and with one seeing eye, blessed the two children, that "'ud never come no more to spake one play-sant word to the lone ould woman."

Saturday night, the blessed night that rings out the tocsin of rest to the worn and

weary, came to Greendale, and found Sycamore Cottage empty of all things that make home. Everything was packed away for the journey of next week, and when the time came, the family stole silently out of the house, accepting the hospitality of the kind neighbour who was to receive them until the eventful Monday.

Sydney told over his sorrows at leaving, to his "best friend" that night, after his head was pillowed, and once more besought him to take good care of the house that his poor cousin built; and this time, as there was no one but the moon to see, he did not whistle, but let a few tears steal forth and sink into the feathers, without one thought of its being foolish to cry.

Lizzie and Katie almost whispered their last good-night, for the twentieth time spoken, so afraid were they of disturbing some one at the late hour.

"Now, don't let us speak again," softly said Lizzie, and she turned away with the full intention of going directly to sleep, but her ear caught a low, crying sound, that in another moment caused her to raise her head and listen.

"What *is* the matter, Lizzie?" asked Katie.

"Don't you hear something crying, Katie?"

"O, it is only a cat,—never mind it."

"It isn't a cat, at all, it is Trip. We forgot him; he has had no supper, poor fellow! I know his cry. He has come all this way after us."

Katie was up in an instant, and before Lizzie knew what she intended to do, she heard the door open.

Katie went down, through the silent house, and opened the door for Trip, who gave all the thanks in his power. She silenced his joy, as quietly as she could, carried him up stairs in her arms, and sat upon the bed feeding him with crackers, that by chance she had in her pocket, by the light of the moon, when, for the first time came the question, "What shall we do with Trip?"

"We can't leave him here," sighed Lizzie.

"We won't," answered Katie, and she tied the little fellow fast to the bureau, that he might not disturb them, and went to sleep with the idea that Trip in Kansas would be a deal more valuable than Trip in Greendale.

And as for Trip, he went to sleep, without one care for anything farther away than the present comfort of lying still, and going to sleep.

Sabbath bells rang out in the July air of Greendale, on the next morning, and for the last time, Lizzie and Katie prepared to go to Sabbath-school there.

They carried with them the last books from the library, never more to take any thence, and when school was over, and the farewells to teacher and class were spoken, the two hearts were so sad with all "these last things" that they went away to cry a little while, amid the oaks and sycamores around the deserted cottage, where no one could see, because "it seemed ungrateful." Katie said, "to make Uncle John and Aunt Lizzie feel bad for us too."

Sydney, by a strange fancy, sought the same place in which to wear away his grief, and was hidden, high up in a tree, out of sight of Lizzie and Katie, in his favourite resting-place.

Down on the mossy bank, underneath this tree, quite regardless of "Sunday-dresses,"

sat the two little girls, and talked over visions of what they meant to do in Kansas, and Sydney heard every word. The result of their conversation was a few more books, bought with the very last pocket money left, and packed away in trunks, pronounced before incapable of holding another pin.

The talk over, the children went back to the kind neighbours, and Sydney came down from the tree, walked around the old place, gathered a few flower seeds, with a little feeling of reproach because it was done on Sunday—"but mother certainly must have forgotten these," he said, as he gathered up the tiny seeds of some brilliant pansies, his mother's favourites, and then he too went the way the little girls had gone.

The afternoon service was over, the pastor commended to the God of the wanderer those who were shortly going to sow seeds of Christianity in a new land, and as Sydney heard the prayer, he wondered if Mr. Bacon had been up in the tree with him, and heard Lizzie and Katie tell what they meant to do, out in the forests and prairies.

"It is time to get up, my dear," said Mrs. Merwin, very early on Monday morning, as she stood beside the bed of our little friends, and she kissed Katie "good-morning," before her eyes were open; and soon as sound of "up! up!" rang through the house, and roused every sleeper.

One by one came the people to say the final word, and breathe the last "God bless you."

The carriage came, and the Merwin family were gone from the neighbour's house. The Western railway train came and the Merwin family, and their fellow-travellers were soon out of sight of Greendale—gone from the village, but not out of the warm hearts they left beating there, with love for them.

Around a curve—and Burnt Hill was no longer visible. Mrs. Merwin held fast her baby, and, (I hope it was not unwomanly) she cried as she thought of the time when that hill told her she was close to her home,—and that now it shut her away from it.

Most opportunely for the spirit of the whole party, at this moment Trip barked vigorously from Katie's travelling basket, supposed to contain only provisions for the jour-

ney. Baby clapped his hands, Sydney cried "hurrah! three cheers for you, Katie! You've outdone us all; we forgot Trip."

It was too late to veto Trip's journey to Kansas, and Katie rejoiced, and Trip enjoyed evidently every turn of the wheels that bore them onward.



CHAPTER V.

AN ADVENTURE AT ST. LOUIS.

THREE weeks after the Kansas party left Greendale, one Saturday morning the group stood at a steamboat landing in the city of St. Louis.

There had been last visits to make with friends who lived on the way, and Mr. Merwin had given his children one look at a few of God's great wonders.

Sydney, Lizzie, Katie Morgan, and Frank Lines had beheld the terrible front of Niagara. Very early on the only morning that our party was there, they all stood to watch the rising of the sun. As it came up out of the east and shone through the mist, Katie Morgan very reverently said, clasping her aunt's dress in her childish eagerness, "O, Aunt Lizzie, look! I see God's name; it is made out of the rainbow in the cloud," and Katie

tried to make other eyes see what her's revealed to her.

Again Niagara and friends were left far behind, and the group were awaiting the arrival of the steamboat that was to convey them up the Missouri.

Half of the morning went by, and still the boat that had been signalled had not come to its landing. Mrs. Merwin, with the baby, sat upon some of the household goods that were piled upon the levee, and waited, fearing to leave, lest the boat might come in her absence.

The children went to and fro, from father and Dr. Lines, to the place where Mrs. Merwin waited, until they grew tired with waiting in the heat of the last of an August sun.

At length, when Maria (the baby's nurse) had exhausted her efforts at quieting the baby, and Mrs. Merwin was growing sick at heart with waiting, came Mr. Merwin and Dr. Lines.

"There's no boat for us to-day," said Mr. Merwin to the group.

"Why?" was the universal question.

"Why, indeed," answered Dr. Lines; "be-

cause the boat that was a boat is only a wreck; it is blown into fragments," and with a solemn, thankful air, the gentlemen began gathering together their treasures for another day's stay in St. Louis, and they went to the hotel where they had breakfasted, just in time for dinner.

Ere that Saturday night came down, the Planter's House, in St. Louis, was the scene of sadness and woe. Friends came, weeping, without the dear ones who only that morning had watched the coming on of to-day with them, some of whom were now lying underneath the waters of the Mississippi; others were struggling and suffering with burns and with death. Amid these strangers our little friends went with hearts very full of kindness, but they could only look on with pity in their eyes.

The New England party held, in an upper room of the Planter's House, a meeting of gratitude for the danger they had escaped. When it was over, Frank Lines and Sydney Merwin went out where the gas was just brightening, by degrees, the long hall, as the man went on from burner to burner.

The two boys went past the man in his work, and stopped beside a staircase, only halflighted. They heard someone sobbing and crying most piteously. Looking up, there sat upon the steps a boy. His face was bowed and hidden upon his knees, and his heart poured forth sob after sob, that shook him like an aspen leaf.

Sydney went up to him, and sitting down on the step just below, he said, "What is the matter with you?" Only stronger cries answered Sydney.

Frank Lines then went up. "I say, boy, what do you cry for?" asked Frank. Still, there came no answer.

Sydney laid his hand upon the head of the boy and asked, "Have you no friends?"

"No!" came the answer, through another flood of tears.

"Where are they?"

"Gone!" sobbed the poor boy.

"Why didn't you go, too?" asked Frank.

"I wish I had," gasped the boy in answer;
"I would if I could."

"Why can't you?"

Again the tears stopped all words, and it

was a long time before any more information was gained.

Frank and Sydney grew weary of trying, and Sydney very quietly brought Katie Morgan to the scene, and Kate sent the boys down the hall and drew near the strange lad, who now had ceased to cry, and was only moaning out his misery.

The hall was all lighted, and the gas shone even up this stairway in the corner, quite apart from the general staircase. Katie noticed the many little things that boys never see, that show a mother's thoughtful care, and in her little heart she could only wonder how a boy that had a mother *could* feel so badly about anything. At first she was afraid to speak; then she ventured with, "Wont you tell me what has happened to make you cry?"

For the first time the boy lifted his head, and Katie saw his face. A fine and good face it was, although just now marred and swollen by tears. He looked at Katie for a moment, and then he said, "I haven't any one to take care of me."

"Why?" questioned Katie.

"We were coming up the river this morn-

ing——” and here again came the sobs and tears at the fond recollections of only the morning, whose evening had come.

“Were your father and mother hurt?” very gently whispered Katie.

“They were killed, and Mamy too.”

“Who is Mamy? I don’t know,” said Katie.

“Mamy was my sister, and they were all killed. Father is down at the place with all of the rest of the dead people, and mother and Mamy are——” He did not finish the sentence, and Katie was obliged to ask, “Where are they?”

“In the river!” groaned the boy, “and I shall never, never see them any more!”

Here Sydney and Frank came down the hall, from their requested absence, and Trip came barking his welcome along the way, having made his escape, closely followed by Lizzie, who called, “Katie Morgan, where are you?”

“Here, Lizzie;” and Katie ran to meet her cousin and tell of the sorrowful boy that they had found, sitting all alone, and crying on the stairs. Katie resumed the questions,

when they went back, by asking, "Were you almost home when the accident came?"

"I haven't any home."

"But where were you going?" asked Sydney.

"To Kansas—father was going."

"So are we!" exclaimed Sydney.

The boy looked up with some interest at this, and Sydney went on to tell how they had spent all the time, from breakfast to dinner, waiting for the boat that did not come, to carry them up the river.

When Sydney had ended his story, Katie Morgan, with her childish vigor of action, took the boy's hand in hers and said, "Come—"

"Where?"

"With me, into my aunt's room," said Katie; and she led him away triumphantly, followed by the rest of the party.

She did not let go of him until she had him safely in the room and the door was shut.

Mr. Merwin looked up at the entrance of an addition to his number, and asked, "Why Katie, my child, what friend have you found?"

"I have found a boy who had a father and mother and sister this morning, who

were all with him on the way to Kansas, he says, and now they are all dead, and he is left alone."

Mrs. Merwin forgot to hush the baby's cries, and let a few tears fall in gratitude that it was not her Sydney that was left so destitute, and Mr. Merwin made the boy tell him his history. He learned his name. It was Paul Lee. His father had just come from California. All the riches that he had gathered out of the golden soil there, were with him, and "he was going," Paul said, "to settle a claim in Kansas, but now he was dead, and the money was in the Mississippi," and at the end of the recital came back all the tears as freely as if the grief itself had but just come.

Mr. Merwin tried to cheer the boy. Mrs. Merwin gave the baby to Maria, and gathered the soft brown curls of the boy close to her, and said the gentle words that somehow, I think, never grow anywhere outside of a mother's warm heart. Sydney dashed away a tear or two, and Lizzie's and Katie's eyes were almost as full of grief as Paul's, when the welcome sound of the gong summoned them to tea.

In vain Paul pleaded that he did not "want anything to eat;" Mrs. Merwin carried him captive to the tea-table, and his boy-hunger came back at the sight of food, which he had not tasted since morning.

Paul was an entire stranger. Not one of the boat's passengers was left that knew him; and after tea, Dr. Lines and Mr. Merwin went out with him on the solemn mission of recognizing his dead father. The boy walked to and fro among the silent, pale figures, lying side by side, until he found his father. He made him known to Dr. Lines and Mr. Merwin by wildly flinging himself down beside one of the dead, parting the curling hair from his forehead, and pressing his lips to the unanswering eyes, crying, "Father! Father!"

There was something not to be resisted by this strong affection, and Paul won two manly hearts as they lifted him up from the dead, and asked, "Why did you love your father?"

"Because he was my father," said Paul; "and my mother loved him, too, and Mamy; we all loved him, he was so good."

Mr. Lee needed no other epitaph, and this

lone orphan boy no other recommendation, than that he was the son of a good man.

Mr. Merwin and Dr. Lines took charge of Paul's loved father, and after the inquest, claimed the body in Paul's name for burial. It was long before the boy could be coaxed away from the sad scene and place, and at the last pale figure Paul stopped.

"Is it any one you knew?" asked Mr. Merwin.

"No," answered Paul, "but I saw her on the boat; she was alone with her little girl, and there isn't any one to kiss her," and the boy kneeled down, and softly touched that cold mother's forehead with a kiss, that if not born of affection, was so near to it, that God must have recognized it in Heaven.

When they reached the hotel, not one of the children had gone to bed; they had begged to stay up until Paul came back, and one and all filled up the absence by speculations concerning his future.

As was her custom, Katie decided the matter in her own mind, and "set about putting the business into shape," according to Sydney's statement.

No sooner had Dr. Lines said "good night," and gone to his room, and Uncle John had put his slippers on and taken the baby, who ought to have been asleep long ago, than Katie drew near the formidable rocker, with, "if you please, Uncle John!"

"Take care, then of my grey hair, baby," and Mr. Merwin's head rose up from under the baby's hands, with, "Well! Katie."

"Where is the boy, Paul, going to stay to-night?"

"Here, to be sure."

"Is he going to sleep with Sydney?"

"Yes, Katie; what then?"

"That's all for to-night. Uncle John, won't you kiss me good night?"

Uncle John did not make instant compliance with her request, but he asked, "What is to-morrow's wish, Katie?"

Katie looked eagerly up, for something whispered, "now is your time"—"Uncle John," said she, "Is Paul to go to Kansas with us?"

"What a question, Katie!"

Mrs. Merwin had been for some time unpacking: just at this moment she found what

she had been searching for, and Sydney and Paul said "good night," and the door of the inner-room closed after them, and Mr. Merwin finished his remark to Katie—"as if I hadn't children enough to take to Kansas already, my little lady."

"I know, Uncle John, it is very good in you to take me with you, but if I am in the way, I will tell you what you can do, send me back to stay with Aunt Myra, and take this poor boy with you. He will help you more than I can, and he hasn't any place in the whole world to go to, only think,—how dreadful!"

"Let you go back to that cross old creature! I guess so, indeed," exclaimed Lizzie, "and you'd grow as thin, and look like a little old thing as you did when mother brought you to Sycamore cottage," and Lizzie grew rosy and indignant at Aunt Myra, though she was a thousand miles away.

"I would rather,—indeed I would, Lizzie,—than go away on the steamboat Monday morning, and leave Paul here, because I shouldn't starve with Aunt Myra, and she wouldn't kill me either. I am afraid Paul will die if you don't take him, Uncle John."

Uncle John's head was just that moment hidden behind the fat, laughing baby, and Katie thought he was angry with her.

"Won't you kiss me good night, now, Uncle John?" she asked, after a little pause that had only been filled with baby's carol of satisfaction.

"Here. Maria, take the baby," said Mr. Merwin, and he most unceremoniously left the room, without giving Katie the kiss she had now twice asked for.

Half frightened at what she had done, Katie put her arm around Lizzie, and hurried her away to bed.

Katie was half asleep, a long time afterward, when she was aroused by a whisper, close beside the bed.

"Don't; you'll waken her," said Aunt Lizzie.

"No I won't, wife," whispered Uncle John, and Katie felt the kiss that she had been so troubled about, and then the door closed. Trip waked up at the noise, gave a low, whining sound, and then went back to his dreams, doubtless thinking that the Planter's House was very noisy.

Katie said a little prayer of thankfulness for everybody, and fell asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

AN UNEXPECTED ACCESSION.

THE Sunday that followed the mournful Saturday in St. Louis, saw Paul Lee's father taken to his burial. Paul left the only grave that was granted to him, with the firm conviction that he should come some day, and see his father's name written on white marble over the place where they laid him, and Paul's grief and tears and loneliness were in the meanwhile carving his own name on two human hearts.

Paul Lee had not a known friend on the round world, except the kind Merwins, who, on the morrow, would be far from him, he thought, on the Missouri; but Paul had an instinctive trust in his Creator. In all his life that was gone, he had found only love and care, and, in his boy-heart, he felt that it had all come from God, and he trusted Him still, so that, at the close of the day,

full of this inspiring hope, he knocked at Mr. Merwin's door.

"Come in," cried Sydney.

Paul went directly to Mr. Merwin and said: "I've come to bid you good bye, sir, and to thank you for having been so good to me."

"Where are you going, Paul?" asked Mr. Merwin.

"I don't know, sir," answered Paul. "I haven't thought, only I can't give you any more trouble."

"But who are you going to?"

"I am going to God,—now that I haven't any one else to go to."

"Is he going to kill himself, do you think?" whispered Lizzie to Katie.

"Come to me, Paul," said Mr. Merwin.

Paul obeyed the summons, and stood with his clear eyes looking into Mr. Merwin's face, until Mr. Merwin asked, "Will you go with me, Paul, to Kansas? Will you do as I wish you to?"

Sydney and Lizzie jumped up in ecstasy at this question. Sydney cried, "Capital! I'd hurrah if 'twasn't Sunday; may I, mother?"

"Indeed, sir, I will try to please you," said Paul as soon as he was able to speak.

The children gathered around Paul, each one trying to express pleasure in some way, and even the baby awakened to the general delight. Kate Morgan thought that Paul's going to Kansas would be the means of sending her back to live the old unhappy life with Aunt Myra; and she consoled herself with the sight of Paul's blissful face and a vigorous hug of Trip, silently resolving that Trip should journey eastward with her; and the dear old swing lying, coil on coil, within her trunk, would comfort her greatly, when hanging from the bell-pear tree, just beside the well-sweep, outside of Aunt Myra's house; and Katie grew into her thought until she imagined herself in the swing, holding Trip in her arms, and the ground all snowy with apple-blossoms.

"Katie!" said Aunt Lizzie's pleasant voice; and Katie started as if it had been Aunt Myra calling to her "to come out of the swing!" Trip hid himself under Aunt Lizzie's chair, and Katie stood beside it, and Aunt Lizzie asked, "Are you all ready for to-morrow?"

"What time shall I go, and who am I to go with?" tremulously questioned Katie.

"With us, to be sure," answered Uncle John, (who suddenly remembered Katie's offer to return to her old home,) "and as soon as the steamer comes."

"Real good Uncle John," said Katie's heart; and it ached with gratitude for herself and for Paul.

WE must leave our Kansas party to continue their travels by river and land, until we find them, two weeks later, drawing near to the famous steam-ferry of Weston, where they were to cross the Missouri River.

The September day was closing into a twilight of surpassing softness and beauty. The long train of heavily laden wagons slowly rolled over the country, which for some miles had been covered with a growth of forest trees.

Walking beside one of the wagons, were Sydney, Lizzie, Katie and Paul, who for some time had continued their walk, hoping to see at every step their old friend, the Missouri. But the river ran on to the sea, and the

horses were worn with the long journey, and the night was coming on, and the prospect of camping on the Kansas shore was becoming very doubtful, when the horses attached to one of the wagons suddenly remembered the old prairie days of their youth, and forgetting present incumbrances, started off for the feeding grounds of their ancestors at a remarkable pace, forgetting all their tired bones in an instant.

This escapade of four hitherto well-behaved animals, put the entire caravan into commotion, and alarmed the Merwin party, for Mrs. Merwin and the baby were inside of the great white cover, and there was no way of escape.

Sydney and Paul followed the flying vehicle with all speed, and found it at last, leaning against a cotton-wood tree, with only three wheels, and the baggage strewn about the grass. Mrs. Merwin and the baby were quite safe, notwithstanding the rapid ride; but the four horses were far away toward the Missouri, and Mr. Merwin had gone on their track.

The harvest-moon threw a whole quiver

full of beams over the waiting party, before the runaway horses returned and permitted themselves to be held to service.

After a long delay the broken harness was made good, but not the wheel and wagon. The straps that held the baggage were hopelessly broken, and prairie-ships carry no extra spars. There seemed no help for the trouble, but to camp for the night in Missouri, although just over the river lay the land of their hopes. Then Katie Morgan ran through the moonlight, from trunk to trunk, in search of her own. She found it, with a huge box lying above it, and called for help from Uncle John and Paul.

"What is the matter, Katie? Your treasures are, all safe, aren't they?" asked Uncle John, as he came at her call and relieved her property of its incumbrance.

"I've got something in here for you, Uncle John, if you'll just help me a little." And Katie kneeled on the grass in the moonlight, and pulled away at the straps of her trunk with great vigor. However, Uncle John achieved the deed, and Katie proceeded to unpack. By the time the trunk was open,

Sydney and Lizzie were upon the ground, and looking on in unfeigned surprise at Katie, as she said, "Uncle John, just hold this a moment; Lizzie don't let my best dress touch the grass—there is dew, you know; Sydney, be careful of my box, it was John Morgan's. Here, Paul! help now; put your hand under these heavy things, till I get something that is under them all." And Katie pulled away at some unknown quantity in the depths, until she drew out in triumph the strong new rope!

"There, Uncle John, isn't this strong enough to mend up with?" she said, relieving Paul of his duty, and Uncle John of his momentary burden.

"Where did you get this?" exclaimed every voice at once.

"At Sycamore cottage," answered Katie, packing up her treasures with all speed.

"Tell me, is it our old swing?" asked Lizzie, as Uncle John walked away with his treasure of hemp.

"It used to be," answered Katie, as she closed the cover and locked the trunk, calling upon Paul to strap it very tight—for she had

a vague idea that there was not so much strength in it after the rope was gone.

What Uncle John thus obtained from Katie did wonderful service. It held all the articles safely caged at last; and the Missouri was reached just in time for the last trip over.

Imagine, if you can, the steam-ferry two miles below Weston. A huge, unfinished, uncouth wooden "contrivance," called a boat—in order to reach which the horses and wagons were compelled to go down a steep place, protected only by a few loose boards from falling into the river.

One by one they passed safely over until the very last, which chanced to be Mr. Merwin's. Happily the inmates were all outside, except Uncle John, who had taken command of the horses, fearing a second effort to escape.

Half way over the animals became alarmed, and the foremost two turned from the straight course, and in a moment were lost. The bank was high and the river deep, and the harness was cut just in time to save the wagon from following their fate; and from

the heavy weight of the freight upon the wagon, and the strength of Katie' swing, it regained its balance, and with two horses reached the boat in safety.

Had the rope failed, the treasures from Sycamore cottage would have found a burial with the prairie horses in the Missouri.

The river was crossed in safety. A camping ground was found on Kansas soil. A fire was kindled that lighted up the Missouri valley for miles. The white wagons were drawn in a circle, the horses picketed for the night, and the emigrant band cooked their supper, ate it in peace, appointed Paul and Sydney to watch till midnight, and then lay down to sleep.

Paul and Sydney carefully kept their watch, peering out for the first sight of an Indian, or a bear, but none came; and the great harvest-moon was in the height of heaven when they were relieved from duty, and fell asleep.

The river flowed on, the tall trees grew in the moonlight, and everything that God had made He kept that night in safety, because they were His own.

CHAPTER VII.

SETTLEMENT.

WE left our little friends asleep beyond the waters of the Missouri, and the harvest-moon keeping watch above them. The day came, and found them in safety. Mr. Merwin gathered his little company together under the friendly shelter of the cottonwood tree, and gave thanks for preservation, beseeching God to guide them to the place where he would have them to dwell, and then the fires were replenished, the camp-kettle hung to boil the water for breakfast, and all the bustle and hurry of preparing for a long march that day, went on.

There were many sites to choose from in the portion of Kansas that they had entered. New towns were springing up, on paper and on prairies. The New England settlement and Tecumseh were not far away, but Dr. Lines and Mr. Merwin had resolved on going

where they would be quite independent of all organizations.

Thus they travelled on, through acres of buffalo grass, past flowering meads of perfumed beauty, until there grew in the minds of the entire party, the greatest amount of admiration and respect for Uncle Sam's great farm of two millions of acres; and Charley Lines and Sydney Merwin thought the country "good enough" wherever they were, and selected many places of abode for their fathers, and yet every morning came the cry, "Westward ho!" until three weeks after they left the Missouri.

It was mid-day when they came upon the border-land of the Vermillion. All the morning the wagons had been winding on and up the gradual ascent, when the country arose in enchanting beauty above the timber-land that bordered the river. Northward and eastward, as far as the sight could go, lay throbbing under the tide of sunbeams, the great prairie sea, while just along its utmost border rested the dark land-line that told where a belt of timber grew upon a river's bank.

Maria and Paul Lee were unpacking pro-

visions for the mid-day meal, when they were arrested by very decided sounds and movements near by. On the summit of one of those beautiful mounds that rise up like great land-waves, striving to reach the heavens above them, stood that portion of the number not engaged in the preparations for dinner.

Dr. Lines and Mr. Merwin were talking very earnestly, and pointing by turns in every direction, North, East, West and South. At length came the determined cry of "Alabama," and the party on the mound took it up, until the waters of the Vermillion heard it, and the sound was wafted off on the prairie breeze.

"What is all that for?" asked Maria.

"They mean that we are going to live here," answered Paul. "Don't you know Alabama is the Indian name for 'Here we rest.'"

"There isn't a bit of a house here," answered Maria, looking round; "there isn't even a curl of smoke."

"Look there!" answered Paul, pointing to where the blue haze of Indian Summer lay across the land. "Isn't *there* smoke enough

for you, Maria? If not, wait a bit, and I'll make some," and Paul prepared the fire that filled Maria's eyes with smoke, until she laughingly told Paul that she was afraid he would build a house over her head before morning, if she dared to wish for one again.

Now began life in earnest to the late dwellers in Greendale. The party consisted of eighteen souls. Of this number there were three young men, who, anxious to try a Western life, had not the means to reach the land of their wishes, and had entered into an agreement to serve Mr. Merwin and Dr. Lines for a given time after their arrival, in consideration of their passage to Kansas.

After dinner they held a consultation on the length of time it would require to build a log house, "three stories long," which is the style of speech in the Kansas country. "One week" was the average decision; consequently it was voted to spend the remainder of the day in providing a place of shelter for the week to be spent *without* the log house. A site for the temporary shelter was chosen. An oak, a cottonwood, a black-jack, and a sycamore, "just to remind them of

home," Sydney urged, were declared to be at fit distances to form the posts of the bower.

Outcame the gleaming axes, ready for service in cutting off the trees at the proper height, and to clear the space between. One of the young men stood with his axe uplifted, ready for the first stroke, when Katie Morgan caught Uncle John's hand as he was hastening past. "Stop him, please," she said, "let me give the first stroke."

"You cut down a tree, Katie!" said Uncle John; "but you shall try," and the man gave her a light axe, and the first sound of forest-felling, (not very powerful, however,) came from Katie's hand as she gave all her strength to the blow; and the faint echoes of the stroke went wandering over the prairie after the cry of "Alabama."

Katie's mark on the tree remains yet, and the children point to it with pride; in fact, it was very recently that I caught Paul Lee carefully at work with his pen-knife, taking out the mossy growth of a year, lest it should be quite filled up. During that Indian summer afternoon, all entered into the work of

building the shelter for the night that was drawing on.

Down came the tops of the great trees. All the lesser trees standing within the space were cut, except a few that were to remain as columns in the green temple. And whilst the men filled the air with stroke on stroke, Paul, Sydney and Charley Lines, went to the thick woods, near by, on the Vermilion, and gathered "piles" of the long dry moss that hung from the branches, to cover the roof.

Near by, Katie and Lizzie, with Maria, and, in fact, all who were not otherwise occupied, were busy in pulling handfuls of the prairie grass "that had come up in the spring and been growing all summer on purpose for them," Lizzie said, and they carried it home to help thatch their forest-roof.

Branches were thrown across the trees until they met and mingled, closing in the roof of the bower from the air above, and thickly they piled the moss and grass, the children gaily throwing it aloft, and the men fitting it in, filling this and that crevice, until the top was so thick that "never a drop of rain could

get in ; it would be squeezed to death a trying," said John of Ireland.

Lizzie and Katie went to the mound to survey the appearance of the afternoon's labour, and pronounced it delightful. Living in such a house was charming, in their view, and their faith in the log house to be built, became of very little consequence in the presence of this sylvan abode.

The five camp wagons were drawn within the enclosure, to guard, for the present, its sides, and the regular night duties began, but with one convenience not before enjoyed for many a day. Two stumps had been left, with special reference to the legs of a table, and that night the board was literally spread.

For fifteen minutes after the house was completed, one of the party had been missing, and a quick rifle-report told his errand, and the prairie chickens he brought with him, showed his true aim, and ere long Maria graced her table with them, and it in turn was graced with the presence of a happy, gleeful party, hungry, as people *will be* who fell trees and build homes for themselves,

“in the sweat of their brows.” The watch-fire was kindled.

“What is the use of having any watch to-night?” asked Sydney; “there isn’t a creature in sight. Paul and I have just been into the top of the highest tree we could find, and there isn’t a speck of anything.

Happily Sydney’s belief was not contagious, and the watch was duly kept. The hour for sleep came down once more, and our tired, thankful friends on the prairie, beside the Vermillion, gave themselves to it. The harvest moon had gone now. In its stead a pale thread of crescent slowly sought the West until it disappeared. As it did so, three dusky forms the watcher descried, moving against the sky, on the mound, near by. Not a sound escaped them. They were evidently watching the enemy’s camp by the light of its fires. The sentinel, who chanced to be John of Ireland, was in a “terrible fright.” He put his hand to his head to see that the “lid” of it was really there, and his eyes grew momentarily larger and larger, until, with an immense effort, he seized a log near by and threw it on the fire. It was John of

Ireland's signal of alarm. Every soul was called back from sleep to wakefulness.

The baby began to cry, and as it did so, a low sound, came from the mound, and three Indians drew near, and their eyes peered into the circle. No word had been spoken inside, when one of the Indians broke through the enclosure and seated himself on the ground, beside the burning logs, looking around on the heads that were peering out at him from the wagons with a kind of indifference that the Indian alone knows how to show. After a general survey, seemingly not in the least affrighted by the rifles that Dr. Lines and Mr. Merwin had seized at the first alarm, this Indian emitted sounds that had no meaning to any except the two outside, who came in, as the first had done, and seated themselves by the fire. They had their usual weapons: the scalping-knife and arrows, painted and tipped with gorgeous dyes, ornamented their persons, only less brilliant than they.

It would be impossible to describe the excitement and alarm that this arrival caused. Sydney would rather have gone without his sight of "one live Indian," than to have been

awakened out of sleep by the "dread three," who had come unbidden. There they sat, their scalp-locks lifting themselves with a defiant air to all the world, and their painted faces gleaming with unearthly coloring. One of the three wore about his neck strings of glass beads, clasped with a huge clam-shell, and a fringe of feathers depended from his blanket. John of Ireland had been whiling away the hours of his watch, contrary to orders, by smoking his pipe. He had hidden it, at the first sight of danger, utterly unconscious of the lingering perfume.

The chief man of the party addressed John by the exclamation, "Chebok! Chebok!"

John was in consternation, and when the speaker approached him to confirm the earnestness of his demand, John fled ignominiously, and climbed with speed into the highest wagon.

"Hi!" exclaimed the Indian; "chebok!" as John fled, dropping his pipe and tobacco, and picking up the pipe he filled it anew, gave one puff at it, and then handed it to the hitherto immovable figure sitting next him. In like manner he passed it to the

third, who extended it to Dr. Lines. There was no help for Dr. Lines; he was compelled by courtesy to put John of Ireland's pipe to his lips. Quietly pocketing the pipe, after it had gone the rounds of the party, the Indians managed to make it understood that they wanted food. It was given, the tobacco pouch filled for them, and just as the day was breaking, the Kaws, or Kansas Indians, left, to the intense comfort of all concerned. As he who wore the clam-shell went, he rent two of the feathers from his blanket, and crossing them, laid them down beside the fire, in token of amity and a kindness received.

Mr. Merwin carefully preserved these feathers, thinking that the day *might* come, when they would be of good service.

At breakfast-call, Sydney and Paul were again at topmast, surveying the country, and they saw afar off, on the horizon's rim, three swift horses flying with the wind, and knew that they carried last night's visitors.

A week later, and the log-house, three stories long, was completed. The trees had been felled, the logs placed and filled in with the red mud of the Vermillion, the roof was

covered—thatched, after the style of the country—and a great house-warming was held. The day, thereafter, the horses were called once more from prairie-grass to prairie travel, and Mr. Merwin and the three men started for the nearest settlement, a hundred miles away, to procure house stores and simple furniture for Kansas life, promising to return with some of the articles left on the way that once had done duty in New England. Katie ran after the party to see if her swing-rope was there in case of a breakdown, for she had immense faith in the preservative power of it, and it gave her great delight when Uncle John answered, “No; bring it by all means, my careful little woman,” and the little woman climbed into the wagon with the treasure to get the “last kiss” from Uncle John, who wouldn’t come back, perhaps, until “snow-time,” and Katie went to the highest point she could find to watch the canvas covers out of sight, and whilst there she told God “that her Uncle John was a very good man, and she hoped HE would take the best of care of him whilst he was gone,” and then Katie went to the baby, who had

somehow felt very much neglected since everybody had been so busy preparing for the departure, and was testifying its neglect by mournful cries, with only Trip to heed it, who sat beside the baby in its cradle, made out of a sycamore log, and gave it all the comfort he could with soft strokes of his tongue, that were not at all quieting, as Katie found.

Uncle John would be away a month, and meanwhile everybody began preparing for the long winter coming.

“Who knows but there will be a city here before Mr. Merwin comes?” said Paul, at the conclusion of the many plans that were formed.



CHAPTER VIII.

SOMEBODY COMES.

ONE bright, sunny afternoon, when Mr. Merwin had been gone eight days, Sydney and Lizzie rushed into the new house, and running through all its three-story length, and overturning more articles than I could stop to count, they shouted, "Mother! Mother!" Quite breathless, they at last found Mrs. Merwin in Mrs. Lines' portion of the house, and they could only cry "Come! come! and see what's on the prairie!"

At the first glance, Mrs. Merwin thought it was her returning husband, with the canvas-covered wagons, but Sydney proved, by his knowledge of numbers, that ten wagons could not be made out of three, and every moment they came nearer and nearer, until horses were counted, and then faces grew out of the distance. The canvas covers drew near

the late habitation of the Merwins, and the children, one and all, went to meet them.

"There's a boy," cautiously said Sydney, as he peeped into one of the vehicles.

"I see a pretty little girl, with curls, and blue eyes," whispered Lizzie, as she put her sun-bonnet close to Katie Morgan's; "I do wonder who they all are, and where they are all going."

As the foremost horses stopped, a man jumped to the ground, and inquired, if he had lost his way. "I'm bound for the Big Blue," he said, "but *this* settlement isn't down on my map at all."

"I think not," answered Sydney, "it wasn't down on the ground even, six weeks ago. My father was going to the Big Blue, but concluded to stop here. He likes this region."

"'Tis pretty fine, I declare," answered the man. "I reckon we will put up here till morning. Suppose you've no objection, have you?"

"You can stay and welcome," answered Sydney, for there was no one else to give permission. A mile away, on the prairie,

Dr. Lines, Paul and the men remaining with them, were industriously at work ploughing a forty acre square for the spring planting.

The encampment of the strangers began beneath the somewhat faded boughs of the sylvan home. One by one the wearied occupants of the wagons were lifted down. At last the little girl with curls and blue eyes was set free. Although there were at least a dozen children in the company, this child was at once selected by Lizzie and Katie as the object of peculiar favours, and amid the excitement they captured her, and bore her in triumph to the house, to see Mrs. Merwin, and to get some of their supper. The little thing was frightened at first, but after awhile she found courage to say that her name was Mary, and to play with the baby. Queen Elizabeth had remained all this time packed in cotton, as Lizzie left her in the garret of Sycamore cottage. Now her queenship was brought out for the entertainment of the fair little stranger.

"I had such a doll at home," said Mary, as she kissed the waxen cheek.

"Where?" asked Lizzie.

"Oh, at home, *my* home," was all the little one could tell.

"Here come the ploughmen!" exclaimed Sydney, as he caught sight of the party returning, and he hastened to tell them the news, and then he carried off Dr. Lines and Paul to visit the neighbors.

After the call was over, and all the hospitalities of the settlement had been offered, Paul returned alone to the house, longing for some water from the Vermillion to cleanse his hands of prairie soil. "Please, Katie, give me the basin," he called from the entrance, "my hands are not fit to touch it."

Katie ran to meet his wish, and little Mary slipped down from the rude chair in which she had been entertaining queen Elizabeth, and let the doll fall out of her hands. Lizzie caught her treasure just in time, and Mary made her escape to the door. Katie had given Paul the basin, and was standing holding the towel all ready for him when he should have washed his hands, just outside of the entrance.

A little sound escaped from Mary's lips, and Katie turned to see whence it came.

Mary's blue eyes were open very wide, and her curls were expressing all possible wonder and curiosity. "Who is that?" she asked.

Paul did not hear, for the outside noise prevented, and his eyes were looking at the preparations for picketing the horses.

"It's only our Paul," whispered Katie, as she drew Mamy close to her, and put one arm around her. With the other she extended the towel to Paul, saying, "Hurry, Paul!"

Paul turned to take the towel. Kate felt the little figure springing out of her arms, and it cried, "My Paul!" as it held out both arms toward Paul Lee.

Paul thought he had seen a vision, but vision or not, he met it with, "O, Mamy, Mamy! I thought you were dead," and he enfolded Mamy in one strong caress, and then seizing her in his arms, he ran past Katie, who was dumb with astonishment, into the house, and to Mrs. Merwin and Lizzie, exclaiming, "*I've found her! It's Mamy! She isn't under the Mississippi,*" and then he darted out of the house, and a moment later was in the midst of the busy

scene in the sylvan bower. Sydney was the first to see him coming, and ran out with a protest; "That isn't fair, Paul. I've the best right to that little girl."

"No you haven't, Sydney; its my own sister, but you may kiss her and welcome, Syd," and Paul held up the smiling little face to Sydney, but Sydney forgot that he might kiss her, and it required many words to make him understand the truth.

"How was she saved?" questioned Sydney, when convinced of her identity.

"That is the *very thing* I've come to find out," answered Paul. "Mamy, who did you come here with?"

"John," answered the child. "If you'll put me down, I'll go and find him. He's good, my Paul."

Mamy wound her way, here and there, through the little throng, Sydney and Paul following closely. "There he is," shouted the child, after seeking John in vain within the enclosure, and away she ran to the place where the young man was taking care of the horses.

"John, I've found Paul, my brother! come

and tell him how good you've been to me. He wants to know how you saved me."

"Indeed I do," echoed Paul; "I thought she was lost for ever."

"I couldn't help it, how could I," began John, as he drove the fastening stick into the ground, "the poor little thing was standing just aside of me when the blow-up came all in a minute, and the next thing that ever I knew I was rising up and up through the water, and when I came to the top, the first thing that I saw was this poor little bit of a child fast hold of one of them chairs that floats, and the river was taking her right away down toward another boat that was steaming up as fast as it could, and I swam after her, and caught her just in time to save her from going under the wheel, and the only thing she said when I made her let go of the chair and put her arms round my neck, was, "I want my mamma; which way did she go?" Well, I got on shore with her at last; but my money was all gone, and my clothes were in the trunk that went down into the river. I don't know the child's name, and she could only tell me about 'mother, father and Paul,'

so I did the very best that I could ; I went all over the strange city, but nobody knew any thing about the child or who owned her ; so you see I couldn't do nothing but own her myself, though you see I ain't fit to do it.

“ 'Twas a great while before I could find out anybody that 'ud have me and the child too ; but at last the man I've come with said 'he'd take me, and the child could go along with his own children.' ”

“ Were you going to keep Mamy and take care of her always ? ” asked Paul.

“ Why not ? ” answered the honest young man. “ What else could I do ? couldn't leave her all alone in the city ; couldn't drop her on the way, and *wouldn't* leave her to die on the prairie, nohow. ”

By this time all the settlement had heard the news of the newly-found brother and sister, and one by one they had joined the group until, when the young man finished the story, he had a large audience around him, of whose gathering he had been quite unconscious.

There was great joy in Alabama that

night ; the children sat up until ten o'clock, and were not "one bit" sleepy then. Mamy was gathered into the household throng and numbered with them from thenceforth.

The following morning a council was held. Dr. Lines was consulted as to the capacity of the country adjacent for the support of the newly-arrived families, in addition to the party already in possession ; and having announced it sufficient, proposals were made and accepted for their stay at Alabama.

"Who's afraid of the Indians now?" bravely asked Sydney, as he grew courageous in the presence of numbers.

As for little Mamy, her heart was full of joy all the day long, and she was never tired of telling how good John had been to her.

Busy with building, preparing for winter, ploughing for spring, hoping always, the days and weeks went by. Mr. Merwin returned safely in due time, and was lost in astonishment to see five cabins where he had left but one ; and still more so to find that he had another member in his family, even blue-eyed Mamy ; but Mr. Merwin had a heart as big as the Mammoth Cave, in one respect,

and that is, that no one knows how large it is; and he took Mamy in, and she shared with the baby the sweets of the youngest child.

One day Mrs. Merwin sat reflecting upon the wonderful Providences that had brought Paul and Mamy into her already filled heart and home, and after thinking it all over very carefully, she went to John and asked him what led them to Alabama, of all other points in the vast country.

"Why, 'twas just this ma'am," said John. "We was bound for the Big Blue region, beyond this, you know. Well, I got tired sitting up there driving all day, and thought I'd get down and walk out a bit, and turning aside into the timber near by, I came suddenly upon something that I knew the Lord hadn't made to grow just so; for all the grape-vines had been pulled down from the trees and twisted into a swing. I shouldn't have noticed it, may be, myself, but Mamy was with me, and she said, 'Let me swing in here, its nice;' and then, all at once, I saw 'twas made for a swing. Going on a little further still, I found a small shawl laid across

one of the branches of a tree, and I knew it hadn't rained since 'twas put there, and I knew, too, that children didn't stop to make swings when they were on the march; and so I went back and told 'em all, that I knew there was a settlement near by: and then they turned the teams out of the timber-land on to the prairie, and we soon found this place; that was the way, ma'am, it all came to be."

On further inquiry it was ascertained that Paul had made the swing for Katie Morgan, and Katie had forgotten her shawl and left it in the woods. Thus by the little events of a swing and a shawl, God led the brother and sister together and planted the prairie with homes!

There were now seventeen children in Alabama, and during the snowy winter months they were gathered into a school.

Christmas day came on the prairie, and the New Year, just as they came all over the rest of the land, and at last the glad spring time broke the thrall of ice and cold.

The little grasses came up. The Vermilion no longer held itself under the cover of

the northland, but laughed and bounded down to the Kansas, on to the Missouri, into the Mississippi, and sank with joy into the warm-hearted Gulf below.

Our seventeen children grew very glad and industrious. Acres of land were sown, fur-long rows of corn were dropped into the earth by patient young hands, and merry parties went and came, full of hope and joy.

Thus the days and months went on until the harvest began, and barns had to be built to stow the precious loads away, that the earth had been made to bear.

Before the second autumn came, Mr. Merwin's family moved again, and this time into a house of stone, against which prairie storms would beat in vain, and prairie cold could lay seige to it without a victory.

Before we say farewell to our pleasant little friends, we will pay them one visit more.

CHAPTER IX.

GLOOMY PROSPECT.

It is almost three years since the Merwin family moved into their new house. The strong, hot summer sun is shining to-day upon its stone walls, and making every particle of mica shine like a sand of gold.

Trip, our little friend, has grown into a large, powerful-looking dog, and is taking his mid-day nap beside the door that stands open to let in any little breath of air that might by chance travel that way.

Outside, the corn is growing, the grain is standing very still in the heat, and you can distinctly hear the flow of the Vermillion.

Within the house, Mr. Merwin has laid down to rest, and the children—how they *have* grown!—are cautioned to be very still and not disturb their father.

The baby walks and talks now, and answers to the name of John Junior; but at this

hour he has become sleepy and silent, and his little hands thrown above his head, he lies with half-shut eyes, watching the lazy whirl of the flies in the air. Lizzie, Katie, and Mamy are up stairs, having a good time,—almost as good, Lizzie thinks, as she ever had in Greendale.

The boys!—but who ever *does* know where the boys are? So we will not look for them. Certainly they are not in sight, as a tired-looking horseman urges on a more tired horse through the grass to the door of Mr. Merwin's house. Trip wakes up and looks and examines, but consents, upon the whole, to let the stranger knock in peace. The knock is followed by an entrance. Mr. Merwin wakes up to the consciousness of an event that does not often occur in Alabama. The postman is come. Out of his package he takes precious letters, and news from home comes for the first time, since the grass came up. The postman says a few words and goes away to deliver letters elsewhere on his wide, wide round, and Mr. Merwin breaks the seal of the first letter. He read it on to the end, and then looking up said, "Wife, we are very

poor! Everything is gone except what we have here; everything is lost; the very money that I got for Sycamore is gone with the rest."

Mrs. Merwin let fall her shining needle, and drew near her husband, and spoke many words of comfort that were not meant for my ear. Lizzie and Katie felt that something had happened, and came down noiselessly to learn that their father and Uncle John, by some mysterious bank failure, had lost all their money.

"Why, father, never mind," said Lizzie. "We have enough to eat. Look outside;" and she pointed to the growing corn and silent grains.

"Won't you please send me back to Aunt Myra, now, Uncle John? I don't wish to trouble you when you've so many to take care of."

"Miss Katie, I can't spare you in poverty if I couldn't in riches," said Uncle John; and he stroked Katie's beautiful brown hair, and thought of the days when Katie's mother was a young girl, and asked of Katie's self that she would never say another word about

leaving them. Katie promised most faithfully.

Notwithstanding the rule of love and cheerfulness that made the home of the Merwins so charming, that night there was care and anxiety in some very young hearts.

Paul Lee sat in silence to work out the problem how he could support his little Mamy and himself, for he saw how necessary it had become to be no longer an expense to Mr. Merwin.

Sydney grew restless under the constraint of silence, and went to see what the stars were doing with themselves. As he came back, he asked, "Father, isn't it a 'good long while' since it has rained?"

"Yes, my son," answered Mr. Merwin; "if the rain doesn't soon come our crops will be lost."

"All the corn that we dropped into the earth!" sighed Lizzie.

"And the wheat that we sowed!" exclaimed Paul.

"Will the grass die, Uncle John, the prairie grass, so that the animals will starve to death?" asked Katie.

Mr. Merwin had not imagined one-half of the picture that his children painted so vividly, and in these new colors, of famine and suffering, the loss by the Greendale bank passed into oblivion.

The sun came and went for many days, and yet no welcome clouds gathered to pour down rain upon the parched earth in Kansas. Over miles and miles of prairie, nothing fell but showers of sunbeams by day, and the lesser moon-rays by night.

The children walked about the fields of grain every morning, with the most anxious solicitude, and every returning day they found a few more leaves that had lost their greenness, a few more long blades of corn hung lifeless and withered, and then, eyes of every hue searched the sky for some tiny cloud that had a shower to spare.

At last, the grass began to fade before its time, and the poor animals looked wistful and sad, to Katie's vision, as if some shadow of impending hunger was already over them. It became necessary to take them to select places, where shade or lowland gave promise of some under-breath of moisture.

In vain many hands brought, day after day, water from the Vermillion, and poured it about some choice bits of corn or favorite vegetables. The drought was at work, the famine of rain ate up the greenness from off of Kansas. The terrible fact became a reality; the crops would be—must be—a failure; no “latter rain” could revive them.

Happily, for our “Alabama,” the grains of last year were not exhausted; the prairie was dotted over, here and there, with stacks of the short buffalo grass, that last year grew so abundantly; and these became great light-houses of hope to the community; but alas! before the autumn was half ended, down they came, one by one, to feed the famishing horses and cows.

It was almost November when, one morning, the Merwins stood in a sad looking group outside their stone house, to bid farewell to “Colie.”

“Colie” was a great, glad, strong, good prairie horse, with native wildness in his eyes, and the pet and pride of all the household, from John Junior to Mr. John Merwin his master. Now he was going away alone back

to his native prairies, to find food for himself, since his master had none to give for all; and this fine animal was selected simply because he was best able of them all to provide for his own wants.

Johnnie pleaded to be once more seated on his back. Paul coaxed the noble creature's proud head once more to a resting place on his shoulder. Mr. Merwin fondly stroked him and bade him farewell. Lizzie and Mamy cried their good-bye; and Katie timidly held up to Uncle John a pair of scissors, saying, "Please cut for me that stray lock from Colie's mane—it will be something to remember him by."

"Shall I untie the halter?" asked the man who all this time had been holding the horse, "shall I let him free?"

The fastening was unloosed, and Colie, the prairie horse, fled with the speed of the wind.

Katie laid away the lock of hair and dropped a tear or two over it, and then went to gather single kernels of corn from many withered ears, every now and then looking off toward the horizon's edge, where the figure of Colie was every moment getting less and less, until at last he was lost to sight.

CHAPTER X.

PRAYER ANSWERED.

WINTER snows began to fall, and for the first time "sickness unto death" came into Alabama; but it did not come nigh the Merwins; and yet, Christmas had not arrived in 1860, before, on the prairie, in sight of all their homes, were the graves of a father, a mother, and four little graves of those whose spirits were at rest.

The graveyard on the prairie, made 'mid the falling of many snows, knit the hearts of all in Alabama very closely.

During the season many expeditions had been made into the adjacent regions for food, and now the very last had been obtained. There came rumors of kind hearts in the East who were bringing food Westward; but alas! no breath of steam *could* waft it across the wilds to Alabama, and man and beast were perishing with hunger and cold there. One

by one the inhabitants beside the Vermillion became exhausted by want and the frequent calls to long journeys through cold and snow.

Mr. Merwin would at once have returned to Greendale, but alas! his resources were gone. For many days the necessity of supplies had been pressing heavily, but no one had had the courage to mention it, until Paul Lee asked Mr. Merwin's permission to make the journey to the Missouri.

Paul had now grown into the appearance of a boy of sixteen, tall, strong, and vigorous, and he was conscious of his strength and carried his point. John, who had saved Mamy from death, was selected to accompany Paul, and again the large canvas-covered wagons were brought out for use.

It was a long journey, more than a hundred miles, and through the pathless snows, with continual danger of going astray. The most intense zeal and care were put into action for this enterprise, and if Alabama had had within her store materials for fitting out one of the "Arctic Expeditions," they would all have been bestowed upon Paul Lee and John. As it was, each one came with some

mite of protective comfort. When all was in readiness, Paul led the way and took up the reins to give the word of motion, when Katie Morgan, who seemed destined by Providence to be a minister of relief in times of trial, produced from her pocket a mysterious little package, and standing on tiptoe, reached it up to Paul, saying, "If you get lost you may open this, but mind not to open it unless you do, for it has never been opened since Jack ——," and Katie finished not her sentence. A shout of "God speed you" rang from every heart and voice. Paul and John were on their way.

"Uncle John" asked a private interview with Katie Morgan soon after the departure, when the following conversation occurred:

"Katie, I am very curious to know what was in that package that you gave to Paul?"

"Must you know, Uncle John?" asked Katie, and her head drooped very low.

"Must I know?" echoed Mr. Merwin; "not unless you choose to tell me."

"I don't like to speak it, Uncle John, but for fear you will think it something wrong, I will tell you. I've heard, you know, lately,

about people getting lost in the snows on the prairie, and not knowing which way they were going, and so I gave Jack's compass to Paul. You know the sailor that came to tell us that Jack was lost,—he gave it to me, and said it was tied up with Jack's own hands, and so I have never opened it since, and I didn't want Paul to open it unless to save him from being lost."

Katie finished her story and ran away to hide herself a little while, for she wanted to ask her heavenly Father to take care of Paul and John and bring them back in safety.

Very earnest were the prayers that went up from Alabama during the long weeks of absence. They prayed as men pray when they *know* that nothing but an answer to their prayers can save them.

Day by day the food lessened in the barrel and at the board, and, if I might, I could tell stories of heroism in hunger that would make you love the children in Alabama almost as well as I do.

For six days all eyes had been turned toward the way by which Paul and John would return, and every hillock of snow, far

out on the edge of the sky, had been counted to-day only to deceive to-morrow, as the night winds shifted the light flakes.

A great fear came over all, a fear that something had befallen the absent ones. It was now full six days past the time of their expected return, and, must I write it, the last morsel of food had been eaten! Little children were crying from hunger, older children were trying to look brave, and declare that they were not hungry, when for twenty-four hours they had been without food. Mr. Merwin assembled all the people in his house for consultation.

"*Can* we do anything?" was the question that echoed from bloodless lips. Every proposition failed for the want of the means to carry it out. Fifty miles away lay the nearest settlement, but who could reach it, and who would be living at the return? Again rang the question, "What can we do?"

"We can pray," said Mr. Merwin, and in that stone house every knee bowed before the Lord of the whole earth, begging that He would send relief. I am wrong; there was one little one not in the group. It was Mamy Lee, but no one had missed her.

They were around the family altar, and the words of prayer were ascending from Mr. Merwin's lips, when a little golden-head peeped in at the door, and a soft, silvery voice mingling itself with the words of prayer : " I see them ; my Paul is coming !" said Mamy Lee ; but not a stir arose in that room until Mr. Merwin ended with " Good Lord, we thank thee !" for Mamy's voice had seemed like that of the angel bringing down the answer from Heaven.

Then there were joyous congratulations, such joy as only a few of all that live ever know, came to them. Let us go and witness the arrival and the meeting.

Slowly over the wild they came—the two wagons laden with life. It was an hour before the waiting group of women and children could distinguish that beside one of the wagons a man was walking. The men had all gone out to meet them. Every step was eagerly counted that brought them nearer home ; and when the first wagon stopped beside the door, and a glance told them that Paul was alive and there, Sydney cried, " Why, there is Colie ! where in the world, Paul Lee, did you find Colie ? "

Poor Paul could scarcely speak, much less tell any story, until he had been fed and warmed. And so John was obliged to give the history. He told how they had been snowed at and blowed at by every wind, and at last had reached the depot of provisions. On the return, Paul came near perishing—at one time so near it that John had to stop all night, and by vigorous measures keep the life in him. In the morning the snow fell so thickly that every landmark was lost, and after wandering about almost the entire day, Paul thought of Katie's mysterious gift. It is needless to say that by it he gained the direction homeward. For two days one of the horses had been failing, and Paul felt the greatest anxiety lest it should fall on the prairie, and the wagon be stayed there. As night was again drawing near, a dark rushing object, fleet as the wind, came into sight. On and on it came, until it had performed a wide circle around the two wagons. It was too dark to distinguish anything beyond the outline of the animal, and neither John, who was a prairie ranger, nor Paul, could account for its peculiar movements. Again it wheeled

about them, this time much nearer, until it stood still in their path. A peculiar sound came to Paul's ears.

"Hush," he said, "it is Colie. Perhaps we can catch him—*if we only can.*"

Hunger and old memories brought Colie back from his native state of freedom, and with much training he once more bent to the burden, and the worn-out horse was set free to follow the wagons home.

There was a thanksgiving held in Alabama that night, although a little out of season, and Paul was promoted to the place of honour.

"Upon my word, Mr. Merwin," interrupted John, entering the room quite unceremoniously, "I nearly forgot to give you these letters. We met the postman coming this way, and offered to take the letters, it was so hard for him to get here," and John handed Mr. Merwin the letters. He suspended eating to break the seals. He read the first, and after a momentary sadness, he glanced brightly up at Katie Morgan, saying that "Aunt Myra had departed this life, leaving her house and goods to her niece, Katie Morgan."

"She's done some good at last, anyhow," said Sydney.

"And I'm glad of it," said Lizzie; "it's almost as pretty a place as Sycamore, or would be, if mother only lived there."

Mr. Merwin took up the second letter saying, "I hope this letter contains good news for some body." Mr. Merwin read it through, and actually left the table, asking Mrs. Merwin for a letter that he forgot to open months ago. It came with that that told him of his loss in Greendale, and he had afterwards forgotten all about it. It was found and read. It announced that a certain boy, named Paul Lee, who was taken from St. Louis nearly four years ago, by one Mr. John Merwin, was heir to a large share in a valuable gold mine in California, owned by his father, who was killed by a steamboat explosion, with the remaining members of his family.

Need I tell you how glad they all were; how Katie Morgan begged Uncle John and Aunt Lizzie to take Aunt Myra's house, and let her live with them; how Paul Lee generously offered half his treasures in gold; and

how he kept a sweet little joy to himself, about a grave that he would now mark with marble.

Another spring is coming over Kansas. We will hope that the good Lord will please to send the early and the latter rain to bless Alabama and the friends that we love there, even while we write our "Farewell."



PART II.

KATE MORGAN'S SOLDIERS.

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KATE MORGAN'S SOLDIERS.

CHAPTER I.

ONE LITTLE LOOK INTO GREENDALE.

"THE old hill is putting his great-coat on in a hurry, I can tell you. O, he flurries so. Isn't it grand? How I do wish Syd. Merwin was here," said Sydney's best friend, who had treasured sacredly the house that John Morgan built.

"I don't believe I do, on the whole," answered Jim, of Robin Hood memory.

"Shame for you, then, Jim. Sydney Merwin isn't the kind of boy to suit you, I know; but there isn't his equal in Greendale for all that."

"I guess as how I like Burnt Hill some, too, and if Sydney was here, you see, I shouldn't have his sled."

"O, ho! that's it, is it, Jim?" and the boy began to whistle, but the driving snow filled his mouth, and he was compelled to express his astonishment at Jim's logic in some other way. Meanwhile the two boys walked on toward their homes, for it was time for dinner.

After a short silence, Sydney's friend said, "How long have you had Robin Hood, Jim?"

"Let me see," answered Jim, and he counted out the winters on his fingers, each remarkable for some event not strictly historical. "This is the fourth winter," he finally said.

"You've had a good time with it, haven't you?"

"Never knew what a good time was till I got it, I know."

"Well, Jim, do you know that people in Kansas, where Sydney and his sister and Katie Morgan are, are starving?"

"Starving!" repeated Jim. "You don't mean that they are hungry—have got nothing to eat!"

"Indeed I do. There is a man who has

come from Kansas that is going to tell all about it, in the school-house on the hill, to-night, and he is trying to see how much money he can get here to buy them food with."

"I'll go and hear what he's got to say about that, though Burnt Hill is snowed in so deep we can't see where 'tis," replied Jim, in great excitement, and he shook his head, and made fierce plunges into the snow with his feet, throwing it up at every step.

True to his promise, Jim was at the school-house. So much afraid was he of losing one word that he was in time to "build the fire and help light up." And when, in behalf of suffering humanity, words of truth were spoken, and individual cases of long journeys taken in hunger, through cold and snow, and sometimes with freezing hands and feet, were related, Jim's humanity began to stir within him. It came up, and grew, and budded all over him, making the worst boy in Greendale seem, for the while, a different being.

And yet Jim watched the speaker closely. He lingered at the close, heard the last words, saw the silver counted that had been given, and then Jim's humanity blossomed out gor-

geously. Jim seized the stranger's coat, outside the school-house, and asked, "Is what you have been telling us there to-night true, or is it all moonshine, like what folks call politics?"

Jim was answered in a manner that put all his doubts to rest, and then the boy ran on through the storm like a spirit born of it and commissioned by it. The railway train, that so long ago carried away the party who are now living in the stone-house in Alabama, was impeded the following morning, and was a half hour behind time in reaching Greendale. It came then, and the stranger from Kansas stood upon the platform ready to go, when Jim made all haste to reach him. He was breathless with his long run, and when at last his feet paused, his words came out at intervals, but with energy. They were—"Look here—you're a stranger—in these parts—but I guess—you told the truth—last night—so I've brought—this dollar—for somebody—as is hungry—out there—hope it'll get—to the right one—anyhow,"—and having executed the last word with great difficulty, Jim put a shining, silver dollar

into the stranger's hand, and departed with the moving train, but at a very different pace.

It was the afternoon of the same day. The storm of yesterday was over. Burnt Hill glistened and rejoiced through every snow-pore, as again Sydney's friend encountered Jim.

"Let us go and comb the old hero's hair for him," said the friend, looking upon the snowy fleece which covered the hill. "Get your sled, Jim, and I'll meet you at the bars."

"I guess not," said Jim. "I haven't got any sled."

"What has become of it, Jim?"

"Gone to Kansas."

"Nonsense. Where is it?"

"I tell you it's gone to Kansas."

"How?"

"In that man's pocket that told about the starving people out there in Kansas. I changed it into as sound a silver dollar as you ever saw. How do you think I could keep Sydney Merwin's sled, when he was starving, maybe? I ha'n't forgot how hungry I used to be after that very sled, once."

“Jim ! Jim ! there is hope of you yet,” said Sydney’s friend, and we repeat it.

Jim’s humanity has started into that growth whose harvests are stored in eternity, whose reapers are angels. Jim, give us a smile for a pleasant good-bye. We will not forget you on the great prairie where you grow. We will look for you, on the great plain beyond.



CHAPTER II.

TRUST.

"WE shall have breakfast *this* morning, Cousin Lizzie. How nice it seems to lie here and imagine how it will look upon the table. I never thought meal and potatoes could look half so beautiful," said Katie Morgan, on first awaking on the morning following Paul's arrival with the loaded wagons.

"Nor I," answered Lizzie. "The next time I see a hill of corn, or a row of potatoes growing, I will say my prettiest pieces of poetry to them; and beside, Katie, I mean always to trust in God, for he has been good to us so many times."

"He is always good to me," simply answered Katie; "I can't help trusting in Him."

"But suppose, Katie, that Paul had been lost, and the food had never come, would you

have trusted in Him then, when we were all starving?"

"Yes, Cousin Lizzie."

"How?"

"That he would take us out of Kansas, where we were suffering, into Heaven, and feed us there."

"Wouldn't that be dying, Katie? I think it would be a dreadful thing to die."

"God doesn't do anything that is dreadful. Think, Lizzie. God makes people die. Man can't do it. And somehow I can't feel afraid of anything that God does. I don't feel afraid to lie down at night and go to sleep, because God made sleep; and so I don't think I shall be afraid when God makes me die, because I shall feel that He is doing it."

"I am going to tell father just what you say, Katie, and ask him if it is true."

"Don't, Lizzie," said Katie, with evident concern; "because if you do, I can't talk to you any more about what God tells me."

"What God tells you, Katie! What do you mean?"

"I mean that something comes into my heart and talks to me, and tells me what to

do, and makes me very happy, and I don't know what else to call it, if it is not God talking to me."

"What is it saying to you now, Katie?"

"Telling me to make haste and comb my hair, so as to help Aunt Lizzie get breakfast."

Lizzie looked sadly puzzled at Katie's words, and told her that she would not have to get breakfast when she was in the house that Aunt Myra had left her, because she would be a rich lady.

"I shall get breakfast, then, if God tells me to," replied Katie, in the fullness of her confidence and faith.

"I do believe you will, Katie, for you are the strangest girl I know. I shouldn't wonder if you should give your house away and live under the fence, or in one of the old trees, as Aunt Myra's chickens used to."

"I shall, if God tells me to," answered Katie, as she disappeared from the room, leaving Lizzie Merwin quite bewildered with this new form of faith, as it seemed to her.

After breakfast, Mr. John Merwin read last night's letters the second time, and came

to the conclusion that Katie's interests in New England required his personal care. With due deliberation the plans were laid to leave the stone-house in Kansas for one year. John, who had been the one-hundred-mile journey with Paul, through the snow, for food, was to be left in possession of the premises when the snows were melted. Thus the winter sped on—on to the momentous future, that the spring of eighteen hundred and sixty made to dawn on these United States of America.

The new year glided into Alabama, bringing with it increase of stores from the grain-fields of the West, and the great heart-granaries of the East, whose doors were thrown so widely open, that the hungry might find food. After the new year came increased length of days. The sun's power waxed greater day by day, and soon removed the ice-covering of earth and water.

Then once again from their shelter out came the canvas covers, and the few strong horses that yet lived were mustered into service by the command of Mr. John Merwin. On a lesser scale, the old moving from Green-

dale was re-enacted in that from the stone house. A year's absence required many changes, and since John, without a wife, would make but half a housekeeper, it was arranged that one of the last come residents should occupy the premises, leaving John dictator-general over prairie acres and the Merwins' home.

Mamy was the saddest of all at leaving, because of John. Mamy alone knew how tenderly he rescued her out of the Mississippi, and how her little heart clung to him, as once her only friend. Her fair curls and blue eyes were a strong contrast to his rough, manly face, as he lifted her up for a last good-bye, and the little girl held him so tightly that John put her away from him with tears in his eyes and a soft whisper close to her ear. Then the strong man fondly stroked the brave black horse that had saved his life amid the snows, and thus parting, Colie and John started on their different ways. Colie would come no more across the prairie, for Paul had begged very earnestly that he might go with them to New England. Will John and Colie ever meet again?

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW HOME.

“ONE hill more, Lizzie, and we shall see the chimneys,” said Katie Morgan, two weeks after the Merwin emigration began; and she added, “I remember the tree that hid the house the last time I came away,” and then a half breathed sigh escaped the serious young girl, and there came, borne upon the sigh, the words “poor Aunt Myra!”

Aunt Myra had departed this life; but as her work lives after her, I must tell you why her life was miserable.

She would not be happy. She believed not only that man is a terribly wicked creature, (as indeed he is); but she also believed that he is bound to be miserable, as he certainly need not be unless of his own will. In accordance with this perverse notion, she pursued her daily life in the belief that she neither ought to give nor take consolation for

any ill. Katie Morgan having been left fatherless and motherless, and Aunt Myra being the only relative within the State, the orphan came under her care.

For five years, summer and winter, under the dark repinings of Aunt Myra's home, lived Katie Morgan, but God kindly ordered it so that there were left alive and made to throb into life, Katie's memories of her mother. And many times when Aunt Myra hushed a merry laugh that would come from the naturally joyous child, with the solemn words, "How can you laugh, when you think how wicked you are, and that you will die some day?" Katie would answer, "Mother used to laugh, and she was happy. When she knew she would die, she said, 'God made me to be happy,' and I should certainly be happy if I loved God, and obeyed his word, and I certainly shall obey Him if I love Him."

Side by side, under one roof, in the light of one sun, under the visible manifestation of one God, lived these two, the woman and the child. Aunt Myra feared God. Katie Morgan worshipped him in the love of her

heart. One was most unhappy, the other saw only sweet content in loving. But Aunt Myra has gone, and we will hope that now she sees what was hidden from her on earth, that "God is love."

Twilight, soft and glowing, spring twilight, haunted the mountain-surrounded village in Massachusetts, when Katie Morgan spoke the words with which this chapter begins.

They came slowly winding up the long hill until Katie pointed out the house to Lizzie and Paul, and awakened sleeping Mamy with the words: "See! see! Mamy,—the house we are to live in,—our new home."

Just as Aunt Myra had left her earthly home, the Merwins found it. No footsteps had crossed the threshold after the hour Aunt Myra was taken thence, till Katie Morgan's feet touched it. For so had she ordered by her will. A neighbour had the keys, and Katie's hands alone were to apply them to the now rusty lock.

The Merwin party were grouped under the wide maple-trees, through whose just budding branches the twilight came, waiting for the key.

Maria sat on the steps, supporting a little

sleeping boy, over whose curling hair four years had left their time shadows, since the morning when he had expressed his baby joy at Trip's presence on the railway.

Paul and Sydney had gone to the neighbour for the keys. Trip stood on the stone steps, looking wistfully about on the new scene; but Trip had grown a wise dog by his travels, and waited patiently. Katie stooped down, and fondly stroking his shaggy head, told him that "he would not fit into her travelling-basket now, and that she had not one cracker left for him, and that he must wait a long time for his supper."

Trip waited, and Colie waited, till at length the keys were brought. According to Aunt Myra's wish, Katie Morgan applied the key, but could not turn it. The lock, for three months unturned, was rusted beyond her strength, and Paul's hands were required to turn it.

Within the house there reigned a solemn order. Katie went from one article to another, all nicely arranged, and gently thought of Aunt Myra, as she remembered the stiff cap, the grey hair, and the large-rimmed

spectacles, that together had bent to see if her little hands had wiped away every particle of dust, and Katie mentally resolved that she would thoroughly dust them now, and take as much care of them as if Aunt Myra's clear eyes were there to see.

An uninhabited house was but a minor difficulty to the Merwins, who had known in Kansas a variety of houses, from the dear old canvas covers to the stone house now under John's care.

Blue lines of smoke curled up soon from the chimneys, and the ever-welcome sound of the tea-bell had been heard; then the moon came up through the soft spring sky, and a sweet home gladsomeness struck a gentle peal in every heart, when the village clock rang for nine. It was so comforting to be in New England once more! The God who protects us all was on the prairie, but it seemed as if He had been longer in New England, and seemed nearer, there.

Mr. Merwin gave voice to the universal feeling in the night hymn, that was sung with touching interest in Aunt Myra's little house. It was

“Nearer, my God, to thee.”

CHAPTER IV.

STIRRING NEWS.

Two weeks had passed since the night of the arrival of the Merwins. They had been busy weeks for all, for now Aunt Myra's farm (or Katie Morgan's farm, as Mamy called it) was to be looked after.

It was Saturday afternoon, the 12th of April, 1861, when pale, tremulous, and flashing in every motion, our friend, Katie Morgan, rushed into the family room, just as the tea-party had assembled.

"Why, Katie, how is this?" asked Uncle John, surprised at the swiftness of her motion, and the sudden rush of the door to its place.

"What is the matter?" asked Aunt Lizzie, as she saw the face so dear to her white with emotion.

"What can it be? Who has offended you?" questioned Paul, and he strove to see Katie's

eyes; but even upon the table-cloth before her, Katie's head had gone down, and she had seized her napkin, and covered her face with it.

"Mother wouldn't let me do that," said Sydney.

"What is the matter with you? Don't cry," said Mamy, and she embraced Katie's bent head with two little arms that tried in vain to raise it.

For a few seconds all looked upon Katie Morgan in profound astonishment. The quiet young girl, who had heretofore been equal to any emergency, surprised them by this unaccountable display, and it was not until Mr. Merwin spoke the one word "Katie!" with reproof in his tone, that Katie looked up.

There were tears in her eyes as she said, hastily, "I couldn't help it, indeed, Uncle John."

"Couldn't help what, Katie?"

"Haven't you heard the news, uncle?"

"No. What news?"

"They have fired upon Fort Sumter and are tearing it in pieces with cannon and shell."

“Fired upon Fort Sumter!” There was not one voice silent in the general exclamation.

Mr. John Merwin’s face slowly filled with the whiteness of deep feeling, until he seemed another man, as he arose and said, “I will go and find out if this rumour is confirmed,” and with as much solemnity as if going to the funeral of his country, Mr. Merwin went forth.

“Better take care how they pull Uncle Sam’s hair, down there, for he doesn’t wear a wig, I can tell them, and his hair is grown iron-grey, too,” said Sydney, hastily eating, that he might follow his father.

“Now we shall have a war, I suppose,” said Katie, “and may be you will have to defend Uncle Sam’s grey hairs. Say, Sydney, are you ready?”

“Yes, Katie Morgan, if you will go with me, and be certain to take your famous swing-rope. Confess, now, Katie, did you bring it with you from Kansas? For if you did, I’ll warrant that you can tie the Union together with it.”

“There it is,—as strong as ever,—hanging

from the great bell pear-tree, where I used to swing when I was of Mamy's size; but I devote it respectfully to Uncle Sam's service."

"Your name shall head the list of contributions to the United States government, 'Miss Katie Morgan, aged fifteen, one sled-rope.' Won't it sound grand?"

"Where are you going, Paul?" Sydney asked, as Paul appeared in the door with his cap in his hand.

"I think it is high time to help Major Anderson, if the head of affairs at Washington don't send down a few iron hands to the rescue," said Paul, and he straightway disappeared. The house grew very still, for Sydney followed Paul, and a deep sense of living in war-time came suddenly into Aunt Myra's house.

Katie and Lizzie moved about their simple round of domestic duties with an added sense of dignity that caused Mrs. Merwin's eyes to follow them with new interest. Meanwhile, if I can put the throbbing thoughts into words that beat through their young heads, I shall find them representing these words:

"Fort Sumter fired upon! Our fort! The

fort of the United States! Uncle Sam's own property!" and Katie Morgan, the young prairie girl, steadfastly studied, by the aid of a somewhat able head, although it was so young, how she might help to bear the burden of the coming conflict.

It proved too true. That Fort Sumter had been attacked, and its little brave garrison overpowered, and our national flag humbled, moved every true man's heart, and set aflow a tide of patriotic blood nothing could arrest till the old flag waved over every fort of United States territory.

The national flag! What wonder that ten thousand swords should "leap from their scabbards," and that hosts of armed men should hasten to endure, and, if need be, die to avenge its insults! It represents the honour, the power and the dignity of the nation. It embosoms in its ample folds a declaration of our national independence. And under it, we have attained to a measure of power and prosperity rare in the history of nations. It is a significant flag. Each added State brings a new star into our political hemisphere. To rally for its defence is

not less a duty of religion than of patriotism. Loyalty to a good government is loyalty to the King of heaven. The powers that be are ordained of God, and to resist them is to resist the ordinance of God. It was no malignant or revengeful feeling that prompted the uprising of the great people of our land when a parricidal assault was made upon our national life and liberty. It was an emotion near akin to that of which a dutiful child is conscious when a parent's good name is traduced in his presence, or a Christian when his divine Master is treated with contempt. There is something beautiful and grand in loyalty to a legitimate and benign government. It partakes of the deepest religious sentiment. Not to be loyal is to be a traitor, and to be a traitor is the meanest and sorriest and most accursed of crimes. Men may be deceived and misled, and repentance and a return to duty may make us lenient towards their offences, but deliberate and persistent resistance to lawful authority is a fearful "iniquity to be punished by the judges."

Soon came a call for seventy-five thousand men ! The Merwins heard it, and Paul Lee,

and Katie Morgan, and John, in the stone-house in Kansas, heard it in due time,—and He, highest of all, even God heard it, and gave the answer, sending it through the grand old commonwealth of Massachusetts, and lo! the Sixth Regiment is the first note of reply, as with hurried feet they gather for the nation's defence.

Hear the sound of freedom from the sons of Plymouth-rock men. Do you think *they* can be silent?

But I have forgotten my story.

The following conversation occurred in the waning light of the young moon, under the bell pear-tree on the Saturday night that we all remember.

Mamy was asleep, and Lizzie and Katie went out to watch for the return of those who had gone to the village. They walked down to meet them, and walked back again, not having met them.

"Shall we go in, Katie?" asked Lizzie.
"I am sleepy."

"In one minute, if they do not come," and Katie listened, for her ears were educated to discern sounds.

"I hear Paul's step at the foot of the hill. I heard him cross the bridge."

Katie's hearing did not deceive her, and Paul appeared, swinging his cap, and tossing back his curling hair, as his figure was seen against the sky of the clear April night.

"What news, Paul?" asked Katie, as he drew near.

"You two up, waiting to hear—out of doors too. I am sorry that I haven't better news to tell, but Major Anderson was obliged to give up the fort," and Paul breathed heavily, as if *he* would not have done it.

"Well," said Katie, "what then, Paul? We are going to take our own again, aren't we?"

"We will try—particularly you, Katie"—

"Wait until you give me a chance to make your new uniform, Paul."

"Is Paul going to fight?" questioned Lizzie, with dismay in her voice. "Paul! We can't spare him."

"Indeed we can," said Katie; "we will send him, and then he will be ashamed not to go."

"I don't believe you care for Paul, at all, Katie Morgan, if you wish him to go."

"Perhaps I don't," said Katie, with doubt evident in her voice, "but I wish him to go, just in the same way that I would go, if I could, and don't you think I love myself, Lizzie?"

"No, you'd have starved in Kansas, if father hadn't made you sit down before him, and eat your share of what we had, in those awful days. You know I caught you giving it to Trip and Mamy more than once."

It was well that only the moon gave its light to Katie's face as she replied, "Lizzie, you do believe that I love Trip, don't you?"

"I know it."

"Very well, Lizzie, remember *that* a week hence."

"To-morrow is Sunday," added Katie; "come away." And she put her arm around Lizzie, who was blinded by her tears, and guided her into the house; then she ran back for an instant to the bell pear tree, against which Paul leaned, and offered him her hand for good-night, saying hastily, "Paul, I hope you are not hurt at my wishing you to go, are you?" and Katie's voice was so sweet and soft that the young buds just swelling on the

tree above her must have been stirred by it, or else Paul must have shook them, for a feathery thing floated down and fell at Katie's feet in the moonlight, and she picked it up, exclaiming, 'See, Paul Lee, here is your mission,' and she handed to him a feather from an American eagle that perhaps may have been lodged there, and falling at this instant, Katie believed it to be associated with the event they had talked of.

Paul took the feather and fastening it in his cap, promised to wear it there, and Katie bade him good-night.

Tuesday night came. In Katie Morgan's house not one word of Mr. John Merwin's intention had been made known, except to his wife, and yet in the Sixth Regiment he was to go!

Wednesday morning the announcement came, and with it a few difficulties were suggested.

"You can't go, father," said Sydney. "There is Hop-lot yet to be ploughed, and Feather-meadow, and all the planting is coming on. We can't do without you."

"You must be farmer, Sydney. I did not

Kansas Story.



"See, Paul Lee, here is your mission," and she handed him a
feather from an American eagle. p. 126.

know of what use your Kansas education could be, but I see it all now."

"Paul is older than I am. He had best take the care of it."

"Paul is going to Washington."

Sydney grew very impatient at this announcement, declaring that he could not take care of anybody's farm.

Katie stole around to Sydney and promised him half of her farm as soon as she should be old enough to deed it to him, if he would be good, this once, and not keep Uncle John at home.



CHAPTER V.

THE WAR FEVER.

AUNT Myra's house was in the town of Cedarville, and the afternoon sun of April enveloped it in a pleasant warmth, and drew out the winter-hid flies, who certainly seemed curious to know if this really could be the world they went to sleep in, during the previous November. The flies had chosen a window high up in the angle of the roof in which to sun their wings, and as I watched them circling there I caught the sight of something that surely could not be a fly. It was too large, and flies are not dressed in crimson.

I looked curiously the second time, and saw a very pretty young girl seated high up in the window, close to where the light came in. Her head was bent so that I could not find her eyes, but why should she be so far away from the cheerful room of the family,

hidden in the garret, in Aunt Myra's house? But look, there is another face beside hers now, and a pair of earnest, great black eyes are following the march of the flies around the window. The young girl stops in her employment, bends towards the face beside her, and says:

"Quiet now, dear Trip, one moment, and then we will go; ten stitches more! Hear me count them Trip, and then you shall be free." One, two, three, up to ten, and then breaking the brightly flashing web of silk from her work, the young girl clasped a necklace around Trip's neck. It is curious, isn't it, that collar, woven for Trip to wear, woven in soft embroidery in red, white, and blue, and glistening with silver frosty stars, and then, finding the fit perfection, the young girl turns the necklace around and reads the inscription on it. But it is too far away for us to see; beside I don't think the fair artist wishes it to be admired just yet.

While we wait the picture vanishes; the window is vacant, left to the flies, and presently below, quite near to us, a door opens and the same young girl, with a warm crim-

son shawl pinned tightly about her, appears with Trip behind her. She stoops to caress him, and I am almost certain that a tear glistened in the sun on Trip's neck, that lately gleamed with a national necklace as she bade him "Go now and have a good time once more," and then when Trip was off, the young girl rubbed her cold fingers hastily for one minute and disappeared. Curious to know what next she might do, I ventured in, knowing my welcome, and found a busy group stitching, stitching, as if the world were waiting at the door to be clothed. "Soldiers' uniforms!" I exclaimed. "Whose?"

"Father's and Paul Lee's; they're grand, I tell you; going to the war; going to teach rebels that we've got a country. I'd like to be school teacher to those boys one term of free school teaching;" and Sydney Merwin stopped to breathe in his speech, and I looked about me at the earnest faces at work. There were drops of blood from needle wounds, hastily concealed,—young, fresh, glowing blood, shed truly for their country, whose country should never know the sacrifice.

Mrs. Merwin's face reminds us this April afternoon of the night in Greendale, when we saw her sitting by the little round stand, it is so full of feeling, so wrought into the lines of some great endeavour. While we wait, in comes Mr. John Merwin with the fire of a great purpose in his figure, enveloping it with martial dignity.

Then Paul Lee enters hastily and surveys the premises to see if his uniform makes progress as fast as the enemy, for somehow Paul feels the great importance of hastening on, before the tide rises too high around the seat of government.

In the clear April sunshine, Mr. Merwin and Paul walked out with Katie and Lizzie. The same four who gathered long dry moss in Kansas wherewith to thatch their prairie house, start now for a walk in Cedarville, and with them are two lesser ones, Mamy, who clings tightly to "my Paul," with a vague idea that he is going to be in some danger from the Mississippi, and "the baby," who walks his five years of life like a little hero, wondering in his little soul what all these things mean.

Tall! Awkward! Rough! Great brawny hands! Feet that look as if they could get over the country very fast! Face that seems meant for something wrong, but with an added sense of the possibility of better things, and the owner of figure, feet, and face, is marching, with meaning tread, down the Sycamore walk in Greendale. Do you recognize the figure? Perhaps not; boys will grow so rapidly, and nature will change us all so constantly, that I will forgive you if you do not recognize "Jim."

Jim has the war-fever; but he has recently learned the happiness of hearing his mother's "God bless you, my boy!" and he is trying to render her life comfortable. There is vaguely growing into Jim's soul the consciousness, (what God tries to teach us from the first hour of life,) that we have a portion in the future, and that that portion is in the love of God.

Since the news from Sumter, Jim has had a perpetual revolution of ideas in his head, and they have all revolved around his mother. He wants to go to the war, and he can't make her comfortable if he does. As a last

resort Sycamore cottage was tried, and the owner has promised Jim to take care of his mother, and now Jim is looking forward to a time of peace in his war of ideas. And he hastens to tell his mother that there is no more sorrow, for she will be well taken care of.

No more sorrow? Jim mistakes the meaning of the word, and fancies his mother has suddenly "gone crazy," as he listens in wild amazement to the outburst of grief that will know no restraint. She showers pet names upon him, calls him the "light of her home," the "son of her heart," and entreats him not to leave her alone in the world, and concludes with making a deep impression on Jim's heart; convinces him that he is a cruel, cruel boy to think of "going away to the war; and finally, in the depth of her misery, forgets that Jim can be hungry if he stays in Greendale, and accordingly takes her grief to her pillow, leaving Jim supperless. Soon he sees a bill-poster go by and joins him, and finds him in the possession of placards, calling, in great black letters, for volunteers.

Directly the figure, face and hands are in

the thick of the town, and amid the stirring enthusiasm of the patriotic crowd of villagers, Jim gets afloat on the sea ; and ere he knows it, he has enlisted, forgetting everything else but his country. It is late that night when Jim steals home, supperless, to bed ; but he pauses, listening, at his mother's door, and hears the low, regular breathing of deep sleep ; and then Jim goes to his dreams, and stands in Fort Sumter during the bombardment, aiding the men firing the guns, helping extinguish the fires until he is suffocated by the smoke ; then he lies down close to the earth to escape it, and awakens with a start—a heavier gun he thought—but no, it was his mother's voice. She had awakened, and thought of Jim's supper, and now, in the dead of the night, not knowing whether he is asleep or awake, she has come up to bring him something to eat. In vain conscience-stricken Jim declares that he is not hungry ; his mother insists upon his eating, and Jim takes a midnight supper unwillingly.

This kindness touches Jim in a very tender place, when he remembers how he has rewarded it ; but Jim's mother, after duly sup-

plying the food for her darling boy, goes quietly to sleep again, believing her grief all past.

Meanwhile time steals on, and hearts are in agony all over the land. The President's call for seventy-five thousand men touches twenty millions of hearts, and all answer, "Is it I that thou callest?" And a ray of truth answered, "*it is something of mine that is called.*"

Beat! beat! beat! Drum-beat and heart-beat keep time. How they march! The company from Greendale! How finely they look in their hastily-made uniforms! Do you see the stalwart Capt. John Merwin, walking at the head of his company? Do you see Paul Lee, with a rosier, fresher face than ever, as they draw near Aunt Myra's house, by which they must pass? How proud he is to show them, at home, how soldierly he can look.

A little group waits at the gate for the last farewell, and at the captain's command the company halts.

Captain John Merwin and Paul Lee advance to the farewell. Mrs. Merwin extends

her hand for the womanly parting with a brave, true heart, for she has smoothed her husband's path to duty, and then, surely she did not mean it, but she falls in her husband's arms, and he sees a death cold face resting against his shoulder. In alarm he carries her in, but for the present there is no sign of life. Here is a dilemma, but it is quickly over. In five minutes Mr. Merwin stands at the gate in plain citizen's dress, and his uniform, though somewhat large for the new officer, adorns the person of his successor, and the company are detained but one moment on their way.

Paul catches this minute for personal good-bye. Mamy clings to him with a little bit of desperation; but at a whisper from Katie releases her clasp, and Katie is saying her own good-bye. We can hear it: "Paul, please take Trip; see! he wears the true colors. I made them for him," and Katie put the tiny cord by which she held Trip into Paul's hand. "Your name, regiment, and company are on his national collar. Good-bye, Paul." And Paul was gone. Beat! Beat the drums on their onward march, and every echo grows

less and less, until a faint, weary stillness settles down in the Merwin home. Hours pass before Mrs. Merwin speaks again, and then she says, "She did not intend to show her feelings, but that she has often felt very suddenly faint and weary, since the long hunger and anxiety in Kansas—that it is a mere nothing," and begs Mr. Merwin to go now; but it is too late! The regiment is fairly on its way to Washington, and Mr. Merwin is to go with the Massachusetts Eighth.

We all know how grandly they went forth; we all know who served and saved our country in that hour of its peril; and we know how every loyal heart went throbbing with them, for our own hearts were there.

CHAPTER VI.

A SUSPENSE.

It was but a little interval of time—a mere day or two after the Massachusetts Sixth left home—before the Eighth were on their way.

It seemed harder to make the second uniform for Capt. Merwin than the first, for now Paul was gone, and a great gloom came to fill his place—a seeming shadow was it, could it be, of his final departure? And Trip, the pet of the household, was away from them, for the first time in five years, and when that night in April came—the first of their absence, must I write it—even Katie Morgan hid away under the bell pear-tree, that no one might see her cry.

Out of the shadow came light. Mrs. Merwin recovered quickly, and again all went brightly in their home. Capt. Merwin went to join his regiment with the Massachusetts Eighth.

Meanwhile Sydney turned his energies to farming, and for three days he worked valiantly; after that came the long pause of waiting—waiting to hear where were the New York Seventh and the Massachusetts Eighth, lost somewhere between Philadelphia and Washington. We all know how we waited to hear, and how the telegraph and newspapers told the same story every day for a week, with no addition to the news.

Cedarville was a few miles away from any railroad, it being so high up that a railroad could not climb to it, and I am quite certain that Cedarville had no intention of going down to the railroad, and so they were content to live apart.

"The stage is coming, coming, up the big hill!" cried Mamy, when Paul had been gone five days. Mamy's announcement was the signal for a walk to the post-office, and there was found a letter from Paul Lee. It was addressed to Katie Morgan.

Look at her now, as she hastily seats herself in the family-room to read it. She is warm and rosy from her hasty walk home, for in this house, where all interests are con-

solidated, Katie was too unselfish to think of reading her letter before reaching home. Mamy is close to her, looking with her azure eyes at the mysterious letter that is come from "my Paul;" and Sydney and Lizzie are too impatient to wait for the breaking of the seal; but Katie insists, and it is done. On the plains of Kansas we used to read the letters of our friends—why not now?

"What a looking envelope! I wonder if they have none better than this down there!" exclaimed Sydney, as he picked up the discarded letter-covering.

"I shouldn't care if it came tied with buffalo-grass, if we only got it," said Lizzie; "do hurry, Katie, and read it aloud;" and Katie read it aloud.

"ON THE NATIONAL MARCH,
April 20, 1861.

"*Dear Kate and everybody:* Do you believe that I am really alive and able to write to you? It is true, and you must believe my statement, but I will tell you how it came to be.

"We were peacefully marching through

Baltimore, from one railway station to another, on our way to Washington, when Trip (your precious gift to me) gave a low, quick bark. I knew the poor fellow was hungry, for it was a long time since I had given him food, and I stooped a bit to caress him, notwithstanding it was out of order on the march. As I did so, a rushing, just over my head, made me look up, and, O Katie, a rifle ball had hit my comrade. It had been fired from a house, that we were passing. Poor fellow! he fell to rise no more. His blood stains the soil of Baltimore, and can never be washed out. It was dreadful! awful to feel that he lost his life when mine would have been taken but for Trip. Trip danced around me in the wildest joy, and all that April afternoon he continued to watch me as a dog only can. I do believe that you, Katie, have given him especial directions concerning me; is it so? Had it not been for the true colors, with which you adorned your offering, I should not have kept Trip with me, for, you know, dogs do not draw rations, neither does Uncle Sam accept them as volunteers.

“How strange all this life is—not half so

fine as the old days on the Vermillion, when we used to fight battles side by side, conquering the old prairie and bringing it into subjection until it came to us with its dear peace-offerings of grains and fruit. O give me free prairie-life, and next to it, something to do for Uncle Sam—and Uncle John, who, by-the-by, I expect to meet in in Washington if his regiment is fortunate enough to reach there.

“Tell Sydney to plant the farm all over, for Uncle Sam is going to have lots of company to entertain all summer, and quite a bit of the next winter too, I imagine, from the black looks and ‘would-if-I-dare’ look of the people that come out to see us pass by; therefore warn Sydney to have plenty of potatoes for me when I come home, for they are not included in my rations.

“I hope you will not get very lonely, nor let Mamy cry too much for Paul; and Katie, just this part of the letter is for you alone. I think sometimes, especially since yesterday, when my life came so near going from me, that I may be killed. I don’t want to distress you, but I must write just this, that if God

should call me away in the battle, or in any other way, I wish that you would always take care of Mamy. I am certain that she will love you, and I hope that she will have property enough so that she may not be a burden to you; and don't forget John in Kansas. You will go back there in happier days, I believe, and if ever you should, and I am not there to remind you of troublesome Paul, think of me and how thankful I am for all your kindness. Here goes the call to march. I am off. Farewell to all and love to each.

PAUL LEE."

So ended the first letter from Paul—"our soldier boy," as they all called him. We all know with what glowing eyes and beating hearts such letters were read in those April days of sunshine and tears, that lingered longer than usual, it seemed—letters written under all conceivable circumstances, and with every variety of material, by hands that knew the way to the hearts that were aching at home. And we all know the chronic ache for news from Washington, when traitors cut wires, tore up rail-ways, and would have hindered

God's smile from shining on us had it not been held in His hand.

Meanwhile no news from Capt. Merwin—lost still between Philadelphia and Washington. Shall we fly to search for him? The telegraph and United States mail cannot find him, but mayhap we can.

Disloyal men refuse to give Uncle Sam passage-way for his travelling company, therefore Uncle Sam finds it to his present interest to trust to the courtesy of the blue sea. The Massachusetts Eighth and the New York Seventh are turned from their course.

The next that we hear of them is well told by another, one who journeyed with them, one who beheld their manly efforts, and their brave success, and who told their story in the following June, and who went through the gate of death just as he had whispered in our hearts his "Good-by-Every-body,"—the brave young WINTHROP, who fell at Big Bethel. He died nobly, he fell truly, he sleeps quietly, near the old elms of Newhaven. A sorrowing city went to his burial—a nation to Bethel where he fell.

CHAPTER VII.

TRIAL OF PATIENCE.

TIME sped on, with a momentous rustle in his wings, and there came, flying from his pinions, feather after feather of rumor, into the quiet town of Cedarville, but no white feather fell there. In Cedarville, no traitor to his country was known.

A longer interval than usual had passed without letters from Captain John Merwin or Paul Lee, and a shade of unwonted anxiety came and went, fitfully as a cloud shadow, over the calm face of Mrs. Merwin, and yet it found no words, until one day Sydney came in from his morning's work on the farm, at the call of the dinner bell, and took his accustomed place at the table.

"I'm as hungry as in old Kansas times, I do believe. Please give me a famous piece of beef to-day, mother," said Sydney, looking not upon the table, but out at the movements of the waiting horses at the gate.

A sadder expression than usual passed over Mrs. Merwin's face. No one but Katie saw it. She said, "Can't you tell beef from plum pudding, Sydney?"

Sydney's eyes returned to the table. Before him lay the nicely browned pudding that he had mistaken for beef. He could not understand the state of affairs, nor would he, until Mrs. Merwin was compelled to say that she had exhausted her store of money, and must await more from her husband.

"Father doesn't know of this, surely," said Lizzie, with her large wistful eyes turned full on her mother's face.

"No, child, and we must *never* tell him; he would lose all the pleasure of serving his country, if he knew we wanted for anything."

"I don't believe we do," said Katie. "This pudding is as good as beef. I'm sure you like it, Sydney! At least I think so, from the rapid disappearance of the contents of your plate."

"I'm eating for to-morrow. Perhaps mother hasn't got plums enough for pudding then, have you, mother?"

"To-morrow isn't come yet, my boy; we will wait and see."

"Shame to complain, Sydney," said Lizzie. "Think of father and Paul! We have a deal better than soldier's rations."

"I'm not complaining, little puss, not I; but one thing is quite certain, we shan't starve if one quarter of my potato crop grows well," and with no farther thought for the morrow, Sydney started for his afternoon work.

"Is it really so bad, Aunt Lizzie? Is the last money gone?"

"Yes, dear, my last penny went this morning."

"Why didn't you tell the woman so who came here yesterday asking you for money because hers was *almost* gone?" asked Katie Morgan.

"Because I can endure without complaint, and she cannot; she has no idea of what this war is for, she knows nothing of the blessings of law or liberty. Her idea of this strife is, that if she gets her daily bread, it is successful; if she doesn't, everything is going wrong."

"And you, Aunt Lizzie, what are you going to do? Will you apply to the relief committee?"

"Not if I can help it, nor unless my children complain *very* loudly."

"Right, Aunt Lizzie! You are my ideal of a *real woman*; you are one of the best soldiers in the army. I hope you'll get promoted."

"Perhaps I shall, Katie, but not in his army. Woman's promotion is not in this world. It is in a higher army that we must look for honor, because, no lesser glory can ever content us," and Mrs. Merwin drew Katie's face close to her's for an instant and kissed it.

As soon as she was released, Katie sought her little store of gold that had been allotted to her as a portion from Aunt Myra's income, and hastened to put it into Aunt Lizzie's hand.

At first Mrs. Merwin refused it, but Katie's earnest pleading won its acceptance, and thenceforward for two weeks no complaint was heard. Still there came no letter from Captain Merwin, and at length Katie's gold was exhausted, and there seemed no help but to apply to the relief committee.

Sydney looked sullenly at dinner on the day

the money was gone, and Mamy came near to crying, in memory of Kansas.

"I thought people never starved here. John told me so," she said, with a plaintive, sorry tone in her voice, and Katie touched the little silken head with her gentle fingers, and whispered, "Never fear, Mamy, you sha'n't starve."

"No, no!" exclaimed the child, "its raining this very minute; your corn and potatoes will grow as fast as Jack's great bean, Sydney. We can't ever put them all in Katie's barn. Mr. Merwin and Paul will have to come home and build a bigger one."

Mamy's ideas of suffering were all connected with dearth of rain, and her ideas of plenty with abundance of the same, hence her little soul was aglow with hope, as she saw the May showers fall plenteously.

The same May rain fell, to the very evident discomfort of the genius of the household. Mrs. Merwin had determined that the interests of her family were to be no longer weighed in the scale of her own wishes, and that on this particular afternoon she would make application for assistance, but a long

walk was between Aunt Myra's house and the committee rooms, and thickly and heavily fell the rain through every moment of the afternoon hours. Fold on fold of cloud shut out the sun-light, and it darkened early.

Mamy and John, junior, were tired of play and grew fretful. Sydney came early in because "he could not plant in such a flood," and Lizzie took herself into obscurity to study lessons for to-morrow.

Truly, that May day was closing in gloom. Every thing went wrong with John junior. At last Katie looked up from her sewing just in time to catch a very suspicious glistering in Aunt Lizzie's eyes. Down went Katie's work, and in a moment John's play-things were gone, and John and Mamy were far on their way to the garret with Katie, where she lured them with the promise of a story. Katie told famous stories, as Mamy thought, and Johnny delighted in them. Katie seated herself in the window, where she had embroidered Trip's national collar, and with Mamy on one side and Johnny on the other, in the dim light of the garret, she wove fact and fancy into a famous story,

that entranced her listeners. When one story was completed they begged for another, but Katie said "she couldn't possibly make two stories in one day," and bade the children play until she came back.

In the family room affairs had not brightened. The evening promised continuous rain, and was very cold, for late in May. Katie looked about for some brightener of their dullness. Sydney had gone to the post-office to see if by chance the long delayed letters had come, on this night of all others. As she waited, thinking what she might do, Sydney came, dripping, and alas! for this night's hope, no letters.

It was time for lights. Katie heard the children calling to know why she staid so long, and with a sudden thought—an inspiration she called it—she ran on to meet them.

Katie had decided in her own mind that a fire, a wood fire, such as she remembered to have seen kindled in Aunt Myra's time, would greatly enliven this gloomy evening, and Katie straightway sought the means of making it.

In the "spare room," never used save for very highly honored guests in Aunt Myra's life, Katie remembered having seen, in the days of her childhood, a pair of bright brass andirons. Perhaps they were still there. At all events Katie would go and see. With a noiseless step and a feeling of awe she entered the room. It seemed something like sacrilege to Katie to venture into the room so long forbidden to her childish feet. She put back the soft white curtains, that she might have all the light the clouded heavens would give, and approached the fire-place. It seemed a long while since the tightly-fitting fire-board had been removed. Katie tried to take it out, but it would not yield. She went for an assistant. It came in with her in the form of a hammer, with which she drew out the fastening. At last the board yielded, and Katie lifted it away.

Just as it used to look when Katie thought the "spare room" high perfection, it looked now. There were the once highly polished andirons, brightened by Aunt Myra's own hands, dulled, indeed, by time and dampness, and covering all else, the self-same cedar

boughs with their blue berries (it seemed to Katie) that used to make the room odorous with mountain sweetness.

Katie's hands trembled with awe, and with a certain kind of fear, as if she had no right to remove them, as she removed the cedar boughs one after another. They must have been a long time there, for the leaves and the berries fell off at a touch. The fire place was one of the kind but rarely found, built when house-builders were quite in earnest about such things, and made fireplaces of a size to contain a small family. Katie sat down upon the carpet and laid the branches on either side. It was almost dark now. Mamy and John had come from the garret, and seeing the door of the room open came in.

"O what are you doing," exclaimed Johnny, as he saw Katie half enveloped in shrubbery. And what was Katie doing?

"She was crying as if her heart would break right in two," Mamy reported afterwards. At all events we happen to know that Katie Morgan *was* crying with all her heart, and that John and Mamy began to

cry too out of sympathy, before Katie was brought back to the present.

"We shall cry, and die, if you don't laugh, Katie," said Mamy, whose blue eyes always lay close to tears, and who had never seen Katie Morgan cry, until this day.

"Katie, dear!"

It was Aunt Lizzie's voice who called from below, and Katie Morgan jumped up suddenly—

"What's that in your apon, Tate?" asked Johnny as Katie gently put him aside and disappeared.

Johnny was utterly amazed. He went down to his mother and announced the fact that somebody had been "most killin Tuzzin Tate."

But Katie followed him so closely, bearing one of the huge andirons in her arms, and there arose such a little bustling confusion generally about the fire that was to be, that Katie's tears went into the past and were forgotten.

Sydney brought the wood, and they piled it high. Soon the fire was blazing and roaring up the damp old chimney.



Kansas Story.



Like a vision she seemed to the man in a white apron.
p. 155.

A pair of very bright young eyes looked up at the old chimney, and a sweet, glad voice sang out into the night-gloom,

“I'll never, no, never despair,”

the owner of the eyes and the voice made all haste towards the village. She left the house without an umbrella, because she could not get one and escape unseen. She was wrapped in the same crimson shawl that we saw a young girl wear on an April day not very long ago, and of course our bright messenger was Katie Morgan. Whither was she bound, and what was her mission?

As she passed the Cedarville postoffice one little sigh escaped into the storm, and one little wish nestled down closer and closer to her heart, but Katie had this minute a waiting household in view, and her steps knew no pause until she found herself where she had never been.

She entered the village market. Like a vision she seemed to the man in a white apron, who was its sole occupant.

“Please, sir, give me some beef.”

Katie knew nothing of quality or size, but

the man served her with his choicest, and received a shining gold piece from her hand.

"I hope you haven't far to carry this," he said,—for the man was curious to know who she might be.

"Not very far, thank you," Katie said, and she received her meat, and the money in change, and left.

The same fair young girl was seen that night in two or three places where her face was unknown. Katie was very thankful that she had carried no umbrella, for her burden was all that she could well bear as she toiled joyfully towards home.

To get in without discovery required the utmost caution, but Katie achieved it, as she did most of the things she tried to do. Not long after she had reached her room she heard her name called in various voices that she knew.

She answered them by her presence, now quite free from the least suspicion of having been in the rain.

A brisk little storm of inquiry raged for awhile as to her past movements. Katie warded it off as best she could, and began busily to set forth the tea-table.

Aunt Lizzie came to her aid, (feebly, Katie thought,) and so she coaxed her back to her easy chair, and Lizzie became her assistant.

"What are all these packages on the table?" Lizzie asked, when Katie had fairly entered the kitchen with closed doors.

"Something to eat," was Katie's laconic reply.

The tea-kettle was on the stove, and the water in it was boiling, and Katie made all haste to prepare the good things that she had brought.

Aunt Lizzie perceived the savory odors, and appeared in the midst of Katie's cooking.

"What does this mean, dear? Where did this meat come from?" she asked.

"From market."

"Have you been to the relief committee for me, Katie."

"No, dear aunt; I haven't been near any one belonging to a committee; this meat is bought and paid for with our own money."

"But where did it come from, dear? I thought you had given me your last."

"And so I had; but, aunt, *this came*—please don't ask me how or when. I want

that for my own secret—for the present at least.”

Aunt Lizzie remembered the story of Jack's compass, and the grief it caused Katie to tell Uncle John, and in memory of it she let Katie have her own way now, although she found it very hard.

Katie's mine proved very valuable. Day after day she drew from it, and the store was far from spent, when a welcome letter from Captain John Merwin brought them comfort and aid.

That particular letter was a blessing to Mrs. Merwin. It found her very weary with the long *heart march* of the battle, where no music cheers and no pen records dear woman's efforts in the strife, and it gave some explanation of the long waiting. Changes had been wrought in our army. The term of service had expired with some regiments, and now Captain Merwin is no longer with the Massachusetts Eighth. Mrs. Merwin read his letter over for the last time quite late at night, after the children had gone to bed. As she closed it and pressed her lips for an instant to her name on the envelope,

as the latest record of his love for her, she heard a timid touch at the door, a soft feeling for the knob, and then Katie Morgan gently came in, bearing a carefully covered parcel in her arms.

"I come to make a confession, Aunt Lizzie, and to tell you how glad I've been all these days," said Katie, and she kneeled playfully before Aunt Lizzie, still bearing in her arms her precious burden, and then she went on hastily with her story in this wise:

"You remember, Aunt Lizzie, the night that it stormed, and we were all so disappointed and lonely, and Mamy and Johnny were so fretful?"

"Yes, Katie, I remember well."

"I tried to think of some way to make things seem better and brighter, and I remembered how this room used to look gay to me when I was very little, when there was a blazing fire in the large chimney, and so I thought it would brighten matters wonderfully now, and I went to look in the fireplace in Aunt Myra's 'spare room' for the old andirons that used to shine so there, and I found the fireboard fastened in very tightly

as though it was not meant to be taken out. After a while I took it away, and I found inside the very andirons that I remembered, and, it seemed to me, the very cedar-boughs that Aunt Myra and I brought from the hills when I lived here. I sat down on the carpet and began taking out the branches; I came upon a brown package, put far back against the chimney. It was done up in ever-so-many yellow-looking papers, but it was so nearly dark then that I could'nt see that. I unrolled one after another until I came to what is in here," and Katie laid her burden before Aunt Lizzie, with the final words, "Look and see what I found, please."

Aunt Lizzie unfolded the papers, as Katie had done, until she came upon a very old-fashioned silver teapot. She held it up to the light, and read the name.

"Your grandmother's, Katie."

"Yes, aunt, but look inside."

Mrs. Merwin looked. It was even now half filled with silver and gold coins, and within it lay a paper. It was in Aunt Myra's crooked, angular, terribly sharp style, that she found written these words :

“To my niece, Katie Morgan, I give this, for her own uses, whatever they may be, and I charge the finder to give the same to her.”

“And you have been using this for us, Katie,” said Aunt Lizzie, and a silent tear dropped on the gold.

“No, aunt; for one of my very own purposes. O I was so glad when I found it; just here when we were all so unhappy, and I wanted so much to save you from going to strangers. I was so glad when it rained that afternoon, and the best walk I ever had was out in the storm that night, with a piece of gold for my companion.”

“Did you go to the village alone when we missed you?”

“Yes, aunt; don’t blame me. I was afraid to ask Sydney, for fear you’d make me tell my secret then, and wouldn’t use my money. Good-night,” and without waiting for an answer, Katie left.

CHAPTER VIII.

A MEMORABLE DAY.

JUNE, the month of great dews, and heavy with roses, looked in, as is its wont, upon our country. Its sun warmed into life the seeds that John left on the prairie, and those that Sydney strewed over Aunt Myra's farm. They were growing—growing all. God had appointed the smallest of them, ere it sprang from the heart of the brown earth, and he watched their growth, now giving them sunlight and now storm, at his own will.

It required all Katie's patience, and all her bright powers of persuasion to keep Sydney at work, for nature had not made a farmer of him, and war did not succeed in manufacturing him into one, and so Katie went out every day to watch the growth of his work and steadily point the finger of coming circumstance for him, and therefore, between

Katie and duty, Sydney toiled on through the June days.

Jim's mother in Greendale mourned his absence long and audibly, and one would have believed that he had been all perfection. So much did absence soften his faults.

In Cedarville, the relief committee are no longer dreaded, and the market-man has not yet discovered the identity of the bright messenger who flashed into his dingy room one rainy night.

Yes, time goes on slowly, very slowly, through the early days of summer and we come to an awful pause in July. Armies have been gathering: gathered in the South, gathered in the North, through all the days since April brought to view the reality of an unnatural revolt, and now they rest with the wide Potomac rolling between. And now the army arrayed to protect the country and maintain its constitutional authority, advances to meet the waiting foe.

Companies, regiments, brigades, divisions,—how grandly they look as they cross the broad rolling river, and march onward. But there are days lying between them and the

clear white light of the Sunday morning yet to dawn.

Our story has little to do with regiments or divisions, except that our friends are marching amid the legions there. In the Minnesota First Regiment is John; in the Fifth Massachusetts is Jim, of Greendale.

Mr. John Merwin has lost his title of Captain, and gained a higher. And Paul is there, bright, brave, honest, and true; and Paul thinks of a town in Massachusetts, where his sister and his friends are, and for a moment Paul's vision is dimmed. He clears it with a silent prayer, and hurries on.

How many prayers do you think went up on that Sunday, the 21st of July, from the battle-fields of North and South?—Prayers for life, prayers for mercy; prayers of terror; prayers of vengeance; despairing prayers; prayers wrung out by pain and torture; prayers to God, and prayers to man; prayers for time, and prayers for eternity. The record is beyond mortal ken, but we know that angels keep it well.

The deadly strife was suspended for awhile. Victory was not to be with the North that

day. Our army fled when no man pursued.

The panic was at its height. Each man in the disorganized mass strove to place his neighbour between himself and the enemy. The ground received those that lay down to die, and those that were overwearied with the battle of hunger and thirst and blood.

Column after column swept over the field. The grand army that went out to victory had nearly all left the scene, when one of that army stopped in his haste, and listened to the prayer of a fallen brother. Something in the face upturned to the light made him pause. The prayer was only a groan, but having heard it, the man bent over, and listened for some further sign of life.

The face was black with dust and the soil of the affray. Jim would not have known his best friend under the guise of this fallen soldier, but the face and the groan held him prisoner. He bent still lower, very close, to know if the groan had been his last, and as he did so, there opened to his gaze the eyes of the injured man.

“What can I do for you?” said Jim, starting aside as he asked the question to escape

the hoofs of a flying horse, that rushed with his rider on over the dead and dying.

"It's no use; I'm finished," was the answer, and the grimy face grew pale.

"Not so bad, poor fellow, I hope; where is it?" Jim's heart failed him when the worst was known.

"I can't leave you here," Jim said, and he strove to lift the man. Jim called to those who were flying past him for assistance, but dear life was calling louder, and on they rushed.

A little water, a very little, from his canteen, Jim poured between the parched lips of the wounded soldier, and he gathered around him a partial shield from the sun out of the material left by the retreating men.

For a minute Jim hesitated. The enemy was supposed to be in hot pursuit, and death or horrible imprisonment was, he thought, to be his portion if he stayed. There was nothing that he could do. The angel of death would, he believed, come to this man before the night was gone, and yet Jim did not go.

"Run, man! run! if you would live to

fight another day," shouted some one as he passed.

"We're ruined!" "We're beaten!" "The country's gone!" "Save yourself, Massachusetts boy!" "The enemy is upon us!" "A host of cavalry is just behind!" were variously screamed into Jim's ears, and his shoulders were touched to see if he were alive, or only a seeming man, by the hurrying throng, and yet Jim stayed! Again he besought aid, and watching faces as they came up, Jim at last found one that had mercy. Together they lifted up the wounded man and carried him to a place in the shade, where the retreat would leave him free from peril.

"Is it a brother? Hopeless case," said the passer-by. "Sorry for you; these are sorry times," and without waiting Jim's answer the man was away.

"Why don't you go, friend? You've done me a kindness. Uncle Sam must pay you; I can't, anyway," and the apparently dying man looked his thanks.

Along the horizon, very near now, through the dusky light of the Sabbath afternoon, appeared a cloud of dust. Jim thought the

hostile cavalry was hastening to pursue. They were too near for his successful flight, and Jim lay down, close beside his wounded friend. Perhaps they might be passed by as dead, and left unmolested.

Nearer and nearer they came. Jim closed his eyes. A little low whine of delight, a bark of intense welcome close to himself made Jim look, and standing over his fallen comrade, was a dog.

"Is it yours?" asked Jim.

"I've no dog," painfully articulated the man, but still the animal stayed and bestowed his caresses.

"Here, Trip! Trip!" called the voice of one of the horsemen to the dog, but Trip stirred not. He was entranced, for the moment, with his new treasure.

"I must stop for the dog, sir. What would Katie say?" replied the young man, to an evident entreaty not to pause, and our friend Paul turned his horse toward Jim and the fallen soldier, calling Trip with the voice of entreaty and command. But Trip was obeying an earlier voice, heard through all the din of war.

"Come here, Trip," said Paul, riding quite close, and surveying for an instant the scene.

The wounded man opened his eyes and started half way up from the ground, then fell back with a terrible groan.

"This dog knows this man," said Jim.

"Who is it, man? Speak quick," replied Paul.

"He's a soldier, don't you see?"

"His name? You are not hurt, why don't you go?"

"I don't know his name, but your dog knows him. You'd better look pretty close. He's a Minnesotian, don't you see?" and Jim pointed to the sign of his regiment.

The man had fainted from his pain, and Paul alighted to look at him, Trip meanwhile expressing his joy in all the ways that he knew. Paul took a few precious drops that he had stored all day for the direst need of his own or other's misery, and gave them to the man. An officer seemed waiting for Paul, and now he summoned him to go.

"Poor fellow! I wish I could help him," said Paul, and he cast his eyes over all the broad field where scores lay in misery, and

turned to go, calling Trip; but Trip showed no sign of leaving until Paul had placed some distance between himself and them. Then, with a farewell caress to the wounded man he bounded off, but no sooner had he gained his young master than he executed such wonderful leaps, and pulls, and uttered such cries that the officer and Paul stopped—stopped in spite of the cries of “Hurry on, the rebels are pursuing!”—and turned back.

“Trip certainly betrays knowledge of something we ought to know,” said the officer. “I will measure my skill with his.”

Still Jim stood by the wounded man, who had recovered from his faintness and was trying to speak, urging Jim, with all the strength he had, to wait no longer.

“Go—my friend—go—I’m no use—to anybody—no longer—you can fight again—and strike for me some day.”

Trip was delighted beyond the joy of a dog as they came up. He leaped upon Paul, and then touched the man with his tongue, and then waited, saying as plainly as he could say, “Don’t *you* know him?”

Paul came very near. Colonel Merwin

bent to look at the man, who partly turned to meet his gaze. Who can paint that recognition, and the simultaneous thrill and rush of words that rushed to meet it. "John! John! How came you here?" asked Paul.

"I had to come—but I couldn't help—coming—if he hadn't—sharp day—for us—bad beat, isn't it? I'd fought harder—if I'd known—you was here," and, with his long effort completed, John again fell into unconsciousness.

Jim looked about, but in the whole line of the retreat no ambulance was near. Colonel Merwin did the same. For one moment John's future destiny seemed uncertain; then Colonel Merwin summoned brave black Colie to service, and poor, wounded, suffering John was lifted upon him, and the three walked by his side, holding him as best they could, and hoping to meet a better conveyance at every mile. Now and then a strong cannon-ball from the captured batteries of the United States almost grazed them, and more than once Colie and his burden were near being the victims.

Within two miles of Centreville an ambu-

lance was met that had room for one man more. Too much exhausted to know his change, John was transferred from Colie to it, and the driver hurried on, with directions from Colonel Merwin for the disposition of John, Jim meanwhile keeping pace with Colonel Merwin and Paul. It was a solemn march Northward; hearts were too full to speak much, and it was not until they were near Centreville that Colonel Merwin thought to question Jim's individuality.

"What made you stand by my friend?" he then asked.

"His face, I think, sir. I couldn't leave him."

"Did you ever live in Greendale?" Jim asked, with an idea of Colonel Merwin's personality penetrating the present gloom, with a ray of hope.

"Many years; do you know me?"

"Perhaps—I don't know certainly, but I guess you are Mr. John Merwin; and I am Jim, that your boy gave a sled to, when he went away to Kansas.

Colonel Merwin warmly extended his hand to Jim, and Paul eagerly clasped Jim's, sub-

sequently informing him that Sydney had told him all about the famous Robin Hood, and that he hoped to see it yet.

Jim's heart beat hard and fast—harder and faster than it had done in the heat of the affray—and hungry and thirsty, weary and worn, hut human still, our group reached Centreville as the Sunday was closing into night. Without waiting for food or rest, Paul departed to search for John.

The order had not been obeyed, and long and eagerly, at temporary hospitals, and wherever he could find a wounded man, Paul sought his prairie friend; but no sight or sound of him could be found, amid sights and sounds that made Paul's young being stand shivering on the shore of existence.

With tears in his eyes Paul reported that John was lost, and his fear that the inhuman driver had perhaps thrown him out by the way as dead. A rigid search was instituted, but the particular ambulance or the driver could not be found, and, with heavier hearts than ever before, Colonel Merwin and Paul went to duty, for John was very dear to them—dear, because he had saved their lives—

Mamy's life from drowning, and all Alabama from starvation.

Meanwhile, from wounded to dying went the surgeons of the United States army, in Centreville, that Sabbath night. A chaplain of a Connecticut regiment had been on his mission of mercy, and found that mercy required all sorts of offices from him. He had been a witness of such pain and suffering as war only knows how to inflict, had knelt beside departing souls going out from the noise of the battle to the silence of the grave, and the fixedness of eternity, and commended them to the God of armies. He had spoken words of cheer to the sorely pressed, had been the surgeon's sole assistant in severe amputations; and as the darkness came down there came a pause in their labors—a little period of release—and then the chaplain remembered having seen an ambulance before a certain house in the village, and, with the surgeon, he sought it to see if by chance any wounded might be there.

It proved a deserted house, but some soul, kinder than is the world, had put a tallow-candle in a tin-lantern and hung the lantern

in the hall. A room opened from either side of the hall. Into one of the rooms the chaplain and the surgeon went and found, lying on some straw on the floor, three wounded men. The lantern was brought in and the men examined by the dim light it gave. There was one case for amputation.

"It must be done to-night or never," said the surgeon, "but I cannot do it without light."

"I will find the light if you will get your instruments," replied the chaplain; and they separated to meet a little later.

Through effort, and money enough to satisfy the heart of a Centrevillian, the chaplain gained one candle. He cut it in two, and with a tin-candlestick supporting one-half and a bottle-neck the other, the chaplain and the surgeon proceeded to amputate the foot of one of the sufferers. His unconscious groans stirred into life the other men, and they turned to see if the enemy had come to murder them there. In the deserted room, with no tender appliances, none of the soft ameliorations of civilized life, the surgeon used his utmost skill upon the poor soldier.

As the work was done the chaplain and the surgeon looked up and saw standing in the door a young man—half-soldier and half-boy he seemed,—and an involuntary “How came you here?” was addressed to him by the surgeon.

“I saw a light and ventured in. I am looking for a friend who was wounded and has been lost.”

“It will do,” said the surgeon to the chaplain, and the sponge, wet with chloroform, was removed from before the face of the man.

Paul ventured in to look.

“It is my friend, God bless you,” said Paul, springing forward to John’s side; and as he did so he saw the amputated foot.

“Was there no help?” Paul asked; and a death-like paleness overspread his boy-face.

“His life depended on it,” replied the surgeon; and he left Paul the sole watcher in the deserted room. Later at night, even to midnight, the chaplain looked in again as he was passing by the house, and Paul was still watching there. Paul was watching, waiting, thinking of those at home, and uttering in sighs

his wishes and his prayers of gratitude and longing.

What a Sunday night for our country to see was that at Centreville! We hope and trust that He who sees beyond our poor ken saw more for the cause of right and liberty than was made visible to men.



CHAPTER IX.

A NEW PHASE.

IT was on Tuesday morning, the Tuesday following the sad defeat, that the news of it crept up to Greendale, and thence on to Cedarville, carrying with it sorrow to all, and the dreadful ache of waiting further tidings. Sydney rushed in with the flying rumor that "there had been a great battle, and the army of the North was utterly destroyed."

"What is it, Sydney?" asked Katie, who had caught the last words as she came down from her room.

Sydney repeated them for her. Katie looked at Aunt Lizzie and said, pleadingly, "Don't Aunt Lizzie, don't look so, it may not be; I *know* it isn't so bad as they say; nothing ever is; it makes me ache to see you look so."

"I won't, dear," said Mrs. Merwin; but she arose and shut herself away from human sight for awhile.

Sydney went for further news, and Lizzie came home from school with Mamy, bringing with her the same sad story.

Two days passed before the welcome news of the safety of Colonel Merwin and Paul Lee came. It was followed by a very long letter from Paul, detailing the events recorded in the last chapter. A lighting up of hope came with the letter. From the first hour of the rumor of the failure of our arms, Mrs. Merwin had arisen to the task of a cheerful comforter to her children, although her own heart could not ease itself of its heavy burden.

A week passed, and Colonel Merwin wrote of coming home on a short furlough; and Katie wished his presence for more reasons than one. July was drawing near to its last day when Colonel Merwin received a letter from Cedarville that moved him beyond the shock of war. I transcribe it here.

AUNT MYRA'S GARRET,
Cedarville, July 29.

DEAR UNCLE JOHN :—I have come up here to write, because I don't wish Aunt Lizzie to

know that I am writing to you, for she would ask to read the letter, and that, you will see, I could not let her do. You wrote of coming home, and I wish you would come *as soon as possible*. I am afraid Aunt Lizzie is suffering very much. She smiles just as sweetly, and makes us all so happy; but, Uncle John, I've seen her sometimes, when she did not know it, and when I know you wouldn't like to have seen her; and then, the morning after it, her face looks so still and so pale, that it takes all our kisses to bring the least mite of colour into it. I am afraid, Uncle John, that if you don't come very soon, Aunt Lizzie will be very sick. I hope it is not wrong to write you this, but if it is, you must forgive me, because I love you so much, dear Uncle John. Give my love to Paul, and to Jim, if he has not forgotten me, and poor John! how I wish you could bring him home with you. It would be so nice to be able to do something for John, who saved us all. I think it was rather grand in him to join the army for the Union, don't you? Though I *don't* see how our Kansas farm is to be taken care of; but perhaps John has told you all about it. I

hear Mamy calling to me, and I must not be found hidden away up here writing, for that would bring a storm of questions, and I am afraid the truth would be stormed out of me. I wish very much to see you, to be very certain that you haven't lost one eye at the least, for I can scarcely believe that you and Paul are the same Uncle John and Paul Lee that went from Cedarville. Mamy calls again. Good-bye, dear Uncle John.

KATIE MORGAN.

This letter of Katie's was more to Colonel Merwin, as I have stated, than all the shock of arms in which he had had part; and through all forms and ceremonies of military law he made haste to get his leave of absence, and when gained it included Paul, to whom came very unexpectedly the great joy of going home.

John was carefully disposed of, in a hospital at Alexandria, and at the end of one week Colonel Merwin and Paul turned Northward.

What a length of time the week seemed to Katie, who kept the secret nestled closely in her heart; and every time Sydney returned.

from the post-office Katie trembled lest there should come a letter from Colonel Merwin revealing her having written *the* letter. But no letter came, and at the end of a week Mrs. Merwin began to watch for Sydney's return quite as nervously as Katie.

During this week Mrs. Merwin had rapidly failed in strength and spirits. On the first days of it her placid face was only missed at the morning gathering, but ere the week ended it came not, morning, noon, nor night, and Maria was recalled to the family to take the responsibility of its daily duties.

Lizzie became anxious, and Sydney greatly desired to "call the doctor," reminding Katie and Lizzie of the time in Greendale, when the mystery of their Kansas life was solvable to Sydney through the same aid; but Mrs. Merwin quieted Lizzie with a bright smile, and Sydney with the assurance that the doctor would not benefit her in the least, and, meanwhile, a strange, tremulous quiver hovered around Katie every time she saw Aunt Lizzie;—and that was very often, for she would scarcely leave her side for any other call which it was possible to avoid.

It was Saturday afternoon, and Katie reported that Aunt Lizzie felt better and that she wished to talk to the children. They gathered in her room.

Sydney whispered in boyish, blushing confidence to Lizzie that he didn't know his mother was so beautiful before; and he gazed at her in admiration as she lay with the soft flush of excitement upon her face.

Mrs. Merwin had made this effort for her children, because she wished them to comprehend, as fully as children might, and as fully as she could make known to them, the causes of the terrible conflict, until even Johnny found out what father wore such bright buttons on his coat for, and Mamy was quite learned in the war-primer.

"This has tired you very much, mother," said Sydney, when the last little question had received a careful answer.

"Well, dear boy, what then; do not your father and Paul get tired?"

"But *they* are soldiers, and expect it."

"And so we all are, Sydney; do you believe that Paul is any more of a soldier this summer than you are, who have been over-

coming your dislike to farm-work, day after day? I am certain that I am prouder of you than I should be if you had fought in all the battles that have been waged since this war commenced."

"Don't be, mother, for I don't deserve it; it is all Katie, for I should have given it all up long ago if she hadn't talked to me every day, and taken long walks over the farm, and praised my work ever-so-much more than it deserved;" and Sydney, after making the confession, hurried away, afraid of any more words.

Mrs. Merwin was left alone. The summer afternoon light came into her room in faint gleams, and such as found ingress through closed blinds and overshadowing trees, and in with them from the outer world, or from the warmer inner world of wishes, there came into the room the desire to see her husband, and the half-formed intention to ask Katie to write to him; but with it came the thought of needless pain, and the belief that he could not come; and then Mrs. Merwin closed her eyes and tried to rest from all care.

Katie Morgan looked in at her, and went to hush the house, as Aunt Lizzie was asleep; and then Katie and Lizzie carried their sewing to the bell-pear tree, and under its softly stirring leaves, just beside Mrs. Merwin's window, they sat to sew.

"What are you watching the hill for, and what are you thinking of?" asked Lizzie, as she saw Katie intent on the former.

"It is almost time for Sydney to come, and I was thinking of a letter that we *might* get to-day, and that would make to-morrow so much pleasanter, than to have to wait and wait, and be reaching over Sunday into Monday for it." Katie jumped up as she finished her reply, and was off with haste, for she saw and knew a straw-hat glancing in and out among the tree-tops that were half-way down the hill. She waved her white signal in vain to Sydney. He would not respond, but he seemed in anxious haste, and Katie went down the hill until she met him.

"Any letters, Sydney?" was her question.

"No, Katie, something better."

"What could be better?"

"Two soldiers, Katie."

"Who?"

"Guess as well as you can."

"Not Uncle John and Paul?"

"Guess again."

"I don't wish to, for I don't care, now," said Katie; and she turned away from Sydney, angry with him for having disappointed her.

Sydney turned with her. Katie's eyes were full of tears, and she was steadfastly trying to look through the present at a mountain in the distance.

"Katie! Cousin Katie!" said Sydney, and he put his arm around her, "look down there and see my two soldiers. They are worth looking at."

Katie's eyes took a fabulously rapid journey from the distant mountain to the bridge at the foot of the hill, and she escaped Sydney's arm, suddenly exclaiming, "What a story, Sydney Merwin!" and Sydney ran after the fleet-footed child, exclaiming, "No story at all, Katie; it is *Colonel* Merwin, not Uncle John, and *Sergeant* Lee and not Paul, for they are soldiers, you know."

But Katie did not heed Sydney any more,

for a very tall soldier held her very fast, and was calling her loving names; and a bright young face was waiting to give her welcome, and between the two and the joy that was just in store for dear Aunt Lizzie, Katie was as happy as any young girl has been since the unnatural war began.

Lizzie was curious to know what Katie ran away for, and determined to look after her, and in her slow, moderate way, found the gate and the road, and there she saw coming up the hill, Sydney and Katie, and with them two soldiers. Lizzie rubbed her eyes a minute to clear her vision, and then, with a scream of delight, she went down the hill as fast as possible to meet her father and Paul.

The scream of Lizzie aroused Mrs. Merwin, and she called Katie, and Katie not answering, she called Lizzie, and getting no reply, she rang her bell for Maria, but Maria had heard the scream likewise and had gone to learn its cause.

Mrs. Merwin lay wondering at the intense silence that reigned through the house, and as she listened, a careful hand gently pushed opened the door, and Katie Morgan's sweet

face followed it. "I thought may-be you were asleep," she said, "and I didn't wish to disturb you."

"Who screamed?" asked Mrs. Merwin.

"Lizzie—*she was so glad*;" and Katie's face broke into a wealth of happiness delicious to see, but she buried it, happiness and all, for an instant in Aunt Lizzie's pillow; and the happiness sprung up with wonderful growth into Aunt Lizzie's face as she quickly said, "Tell me, Katie, what it is?"

"Why aunt, it's Uncle John and Paul come home!" and now Katie's face watched the effect of her words, fearing the joy might be too much for Aunt Lizzie.

"Where is he?" said she.

"Here," said the familiar voice of Colonel Merwin, and the joyous scene that followed we need not describe.

"Can I go in now?" said Paul to Katie, who was making her escape.

"Certainly, Paul, only don't stay long."

"Katie! Kittie! Pussy!" were the calls through Aunt Myra's house a little later, but Katie seemed to have gone from the premises. Paul undertook a voyage of discovery, and

appeared suddenly in the garret, where Katie had hidden herself away from mortal eyes.

“What is it, Katie?” he asked. “Are you sorry to see us come home without the honor of a scar? But John has saved the credit of the family for you.”

“Sorry! Paul. Think of Aunt Lizzie; do you know, Paul, that I think she is just as much of a hero as any that they bring home with such loads of military honours; and I have been afraid that she would die before Uncle John came, and now that he is come I am going to ask him to stay at home. Do you think he will?”

“If *you* ask him.”

“You’re laughing at me,” and then suddenly remembering something forgotten in her joy, Katie asked, “Where is Trip?”

“Tied up at the stage-office for fear he’d get home before us.”

“And not hurt one bit?”

“Your eyes shall give testimony to satisfy yourself, Katie.”

“And Colie?”

“Alive and well; anything more, Katie?”

"Yes, your Bible; did you lose it in the battle?"

For answer, Paul took out the precious little packet and gave it silently into her hands.

Katie opened it and ran her fingers through the leaves. She started suddenly, saying, "There is blood on it—Were you hurt. How came it there?"

"Poor fellows, Katie! I gave it to the wounded soldiers to read. These are sacred marks. The blood of heroes is there;" and Paul took his Bible—Katie's last best gift to him—and looked tenderly at it.

"It is very good, isn't it, Paul?"

"What, Katie?"

"All these things—I mean all that God does. Shall we go for Trip?"

Mamy, John Junior, Katie, and Paul, went in the soft summer gleaming to welcome Trip, and brought him home with great rejoicing; and on that August night Aunt Myra's house resounded with a happy hymn, written of God for those that love Him.

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